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# PREACHING IN LONDON

*A Diary of  
Anglo-American Friendship*

BY

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TO  
JOHN WILSON  
AND  
HIS DAUGHTER JANET  
WHO WERE FATHER AND SISTER TO  
ME IN A DARK TIME  
I INSCRIBE THIS BOOK OF THE CITY TEMPLE  
WITH  
LOVE AND GRATITUDE



## IN THE VESTRY.

Parts of the Diary in the following pages appeared as a series of articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* for August, September, and October, 1921; and I am indebted to the editor for his kindness in allowing me to use them here. The City Temple ministry was not intended to be permanent, but was undertaken as a kind of unofficial ambassadorship of goodwill from the Churches of America to the Churches of Britain, and as an adventure in Anglo-American friendship. It was a great privilege to stand at the cross-roads of the centuries at such a time, a teacher of Christian faith and an interpreter of the spirit and genius of our country to the motherland. The Diary, kept during those years of the Great War and the Little Peace, records observations, impressions, and reflections of men, women, and movements, of actors still on the stage of affairs, of issues still unsettled, and of beauty spots in one of the loveliest lands on earth.

Of the necessity of the friendship of English-speaking peoples I am utterly convinced; but the possibility of it is not so manifest as it seemed to be. Once I discussed this matter with the most picturesque statesman of England over the tea-cups; and to my suggestion that America should have a tea-hour for relaxation from the strain of our hurrying life, he replied: "But, remember; we offered you tea once and you would not take it!" His thought was that what Americans and Britons need is "a smoking-room acquaintance"—something to break the stiffness and formality, and enable them to mingle in freedom and fellowship. No doubt; but great nations cannot mingle

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in a smoking-room, and in this instance their ignorance of each other is appalling. Still, if each one who journeys from one country to the other is an ambassador of goodwill, the sum of our efforts will be felt at last.

In the following record my design has been not to describe the war, save as it echoed and eddied round the pulpit of the City Temple; but to interpret, in some measure, its moral, social and spiritual reactions in England—and, greatly daring, to give some hint of the tragedy wrought in the deep places of the soul. Long ago Jules Lemaitre said that criticism of our contemporaries is not criticism, but conversation; and if in these pages I have spoken freely of men and women, I trust I have not failed either of courtesy or of goodwill. Once more I wish to confess my deep gratitude for the cordial and fraternal reception everywhere accorded me in England, Scotland and Wales, and to express the hope that when the irritation and confusion of the war have passed away, the two great English-speaking peoples may be drawn into an intelligent and enduring friendship.

J. F. N.

*The Church of the Divine Paternity.  
New York City.*

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## I: *A Pulpit Romance*



# PREACHING IN LONDON

## I

### *A Pulpit Romance*

#### I

To be suddenly picked up from central Iowa and set down in central London would be a startling enough experience at any time, but it was doubly so in 1916. No two environments could hardly be more unlike than a quiet little community in the far middle West of America and the old grey city of London, at that time an arsenal and a hospital at the centre of an embattled world. Passing from one atmosphere into the other was not only bewildering, but actually painful, and the shock of it will be the memory of a lifetime. From the battle of the Somme until the end of the war, and for more than a year during the awful eclipse of ideals which followed it—more trying by far than the war—my work was done under conditions so appalling as to test every resource both of faith and of fortitude.

For well-nigh eight years before, sermons from the Little Brick Church of Cedar Rapids had been printed in England, first in *The Christian World Pulpit*, and later, beginning early in 1916, every week in the now defunct *Christian Commonwealth*. The sermons had brought me many letters from all parts of the world, even from Africa

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and India, but I had never imagined that I might be asked to pull up the roots of my life and transplant them five thousand miles away on the other side of the sea. In simple truth the invitation to the ministry of the City Temple was as much a surprise to me as it could have been to anyone else, upsetting all my plans and plunging me into an agony of perplexity. Unsought and undesired, it set me a problem hard to solve, and if I went at last it was due less to my own wish than to the strategy of friends, whose cunning was only equalled by their kindness.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, as it finally turned out, I twice declined the City Temple before accepting it, and I should never have gone at all had it not been for the war, and the opportunity which it offered for a ministry of interpretation between two peoples upon whose intelligent friendship, as I had long believed, the future freedom and security of the world must largely depend.

As far back as 1894, while yet a lad, I had read an essay by Admiral Mahan, entitled "Possibilities of Anglo-American Reunion," and it had deeply stirred me. The author rejoiced in the unmistakable growth of mutual kindly feelings between the two peoples, and pointed out that "this reviving affection well might fix the serious attention of those who watch the growth of world questions, recognising how far imagination and sympathy rule the world." He emphasised the political traditions and moral ideals held in common and, above all, "that singular combination of two essential but opposing factors—of individual freedom with subjection to law." Naturally, as an authority on sea power, the writer did not fail to

<sup>1</sup>Drawn to England by the Shakespeare Festivals, and having agreed to preach for a month in the City Temple, not until a few days before sailing did I know that the people of the Temple actually had me in mind for their minister. It was then too late to cancel the engagement, and it made an embarrassing situation. No sooner had I landed than an article appeared in the *Westminster Gazette* entitled "Preaching 'With a View,'" which, if it had a semblance of truth on the surface, was very far from the fact, as I stated in my first sermon in the Temple. The sermons of the summer were published in a volume entitled, "An Ambassador."

touch that aspect of the matter, but only to show that the two peoples had not yet realised that their interests on the sea are, in fact, identical. For that reason, while "desirous as anyone can be to see the fact accomplished," Admiral Mahan rejected the project as premature; and he said it would remain so, "*antecedent to the great teacher, Experience,*" because neither nation as yet realised the common interest. "The ground," he concluded, "is not yet prepared in the hearts and understandings of Americans, and I doubt whether in those of British citizens."

Much happened between 1894 and 1916 to prepare the ground in respect of Anglo-American friendship, both in the world at large and in my own heart. As a student, greatly daring, I made bold to discuss the question with the late John Fiske; or rather, I heard him discuss it. Anyone who ever talked with that remarkable man knows that all one had to do was to ask a question—and listen. It was like turning on a faucet, releasing a stream of brilliant talk, and when he had finished there was little left to be said on the subject. Later, while arranging with Goldwin Smith, in his beautiful home, The Grange, in Toronto, for an introduction to my volume on "Lincoln and Herndon"—an engagement, alas, which death did not permit him to fulfil—once more I heard the destiny of English-speaking peoples dealt with by one of the ablest publicists of his day, whose knowledge was as thorough as his vision was prophetic. Studies such as these, with much reading of history, made it clear to me, when the war broke out, that "the great teacher, Experience," had at last begun to do his work; and I had hope, in spite of appearances, that the vision of men like Chamberlain and John Hay, to name no others, might at last be followed and obeyed.

America, in 1916, was still officially neutral, but it

seemed plain that our Republic would finally take its place and do its part in keeping the public law and order of the world. If such an event lay in the lap of the gods, it would come in the fulness of time, be the date near or far. In any event there would be need for a ministry of interpretation between one people and another, and the ideal place for such a service was the City Temple, in whose pulpit more American voices had been heard, from the days of Beecher down, than in any shrine in England. Such was the spirit and motive with which I went to England in June, 1916, as an Ambassador of Goodwill from the churches of America to the churches of Britain; and it was a joy to learn that the invitation extended to me was in fact intended to be an overture of goodwill to America.

## II

New York, seen from the Harbor, is a great picture indeed, and when the fog lifts and the sunlight falls upon it in splendour it looks like a fairy city built in a dream. Its architecture is as ambitious as the Tower of Babel, which is a symbol of its polyglot population. For an inlander like myself the sea was a thing of wonder and mystery, at once a fact and a symbol; and though I have crossed it many times since—seven times during the war, when lightning slumbered in its waves—it has lost none of the spell which it cast over me the first time I set sail upon its bosom. No words may ever hope to tell the feelings of a man when for the first time he leaves his native land and turns to the open sea, sailing out over the blue rim of the world! From my Diary of those days, which fills the following pages, I venture to transcribe, first, these lines written on the sea:

*June 20th, 1916:*—“The sea is His, and He made it.” All day long the great words of the Bible about the sea have been coming to mind, with meanings I had never guessed before. “There is sorrow upon the sea: it cannot be still”—what words they are as one looks out upon these restless, reinless waters! And there are those other words, so freighted with meaning just now: “And the sea gave up the dead that were in it”; but best of all the line of the Psalmist, “Thy way, O Lord, is in the sea.”

Truly, if I were a rich Pagan instead of a poor Christian, I would build a temple to the sea. It is so patient and strong to ship or soul that bravely casts loose upon its mighty promises; so variable and stern to the unpiloted and unseaworthy. It is a great burden bearer. It cannot be overloaded. It never breaks down. It never grows weary. It never needs repairs. It is not only a helper, but a teacher and friend. It rests the eye with its vastness and its infinite variety. It calms the heart with its never-ending music. It speaks to the mind of that Divine depth over which the mystics brood, but never fathom. It is responsive to every mood—now sad, now troubled, now quietly meditative, now bright with what the Greeks called its “inextinguishable laughter.” It preaches more sermons than all preachers; and as we listen, the sighs of human care are lost in the murmur of its many waters.

*June 22nd:*—Why did St. John leave the sea out of his vision of heaven? No doubt the exile of Patmos, longing for the sight of familiar faces, grew a-weary of the imprisoning sea. Sundered by leagues of tumbling waters from the sorely tried little church he loved, he dreamed of a land where there would be “no more sea.” But it is not so now. Once a symbol of separation, the sea has become a bond between lands and peoples. The sea in the Bible, like the sea of which Homer sang, is the unknown, untamed sea. To-day we sail a sea whose ways and winds

are known, and whose forces have yielded to the power of intelligence.

Still, Matthew Arnold speaks of an "unplumbed, salt, estranging sea," by which he means the awful isolation of each soul in an unfathomable universe. More often in English poetry—and, indeed, in all poetry, since Homer, that has in it the sound of the sea—its tidal rhythms, its measured waves and measureless horizons, have been symbols of the deep, mysterious thoughts of God; as the stars round off the three divisions of the "Divine Comedy." The music of this deeper sea rolls through all great poetry, and nowhere with more melody than in Shakespeare, who caught the very cadence of that eternal sea whose waves are years and whose depth is eternity.

*June 24th:*—How can a man be irreligious on the sea? Are we not, all of us, out on the bosom of the deep, with the Infinite above and beneath us? We feel secure enough, thanks largely to the cheerful company, the dear faces, and the duties and pieties of the day. Still, when we look over the edge of the ship, up starts that primitive terror which only faith can allay. Religion is a thing of the depths and for the depths. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord; my boat is small, and Thine ocean is great"—was the prayer of the old Breton fisherman; and it has in it the profound instinct which lies at the heart of faith. There will be companies of believing souls so long as there are deep, unplumbed places in this life of ours.

Last night I sat up on the deck of the ship near the prow, at midnight, long after others had gone below. It was "a clear, cool night of stars," and the great sea lay spread out beneath. Never did the old words, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him," come home to me with such awful majesty of simple truth to subdue the heart and still it. Then the ship bell rang out the hour, and the watchman from above cried, "All's well," and I

went to my couch knowing that if I sank it would not be into the sea, but beyond it!

*June 27th:*—England! It is like a picture in a story-book, beautiful in its sea-girt island glory, albeit now encircled by foes; a Blessed Island, for a thousand years the home and the fortress of a wise and ordered liberty. How lovely it is in the vivid green of its summer garb, and so dainty withal, like a well-kept park; its people so kindly, so soft-voiced, so considerate—the most courteous people in the world. It seems more than half like home to me; its spirit is in my blood, its great souls are among my heroes, its singers are my teachers.

London is like a dream come true. As I ramble through it I am haunted by the curious feeling of something half-forgotten, but still dimly remembered, like a reminiscence of some previous state of existence. It is at once familiar and strange. Passing from New York to London is like going from a foot-ball team to a faculty meeting—from noisy youth to quiet middle age. New York is new, spacious, graceful; London, with its monotonous and melancholy houses, seems like an inharmonious patchwork, as if pieced together without design. Yet it is lovable in its sprawling confusion, and as I stepped out of Euston Station I saw a procession of women workers march by with swinging step, with gay uniforms, jaunty hats, and plumes a-nodding—what would their great-grandmothers have thought if they had seen it!

Soldiers, sailors, nurses, ambulances are everywhere; one steps out of a time-stained church—like the Temple, where poor “Noll” found rest—into an air athrill with the sense of a vast tragedy only a few miles away. London in war-times, subdued, suffering, heroic, a museum of history and a hive of industry; its people cemented by one spirit of service; all ranks vowed to one motto, “Every man do his bit—and stick it”—how unlike America where

the war is a far off echo, as if raging on another planet, and where opinion and sympathy are so tragically divided!

*June 30th:*—Went to St. Paul's yesterday, and after the service wandered for hours in the recesses of the cathedral. Descending into the crypt, one looks upon the tomb of Nelson, the mighty lord of the sea, and the sleeping place of Wellington, the great commander of the British race. Lord Roberts rests a few feet away. Here sleep the artists—as the poets are honoured in the Abbey—among them Wren, the builder. He was a master genius, and yet, somehow, his masterpiece and monument does not leave upon me a profound religious impression. None of his churches thrill me. St. Paul's is massive and magnificent, but intellectual rather than spiritual. The work of a brilliant man in a brilliant age, it lacks that ineffable thing which one can neither define nor resist.

What a different impression one receives at the Abbey, where I attended the afternoon service to-day. Stately, austere, beautiful in the autumn sunlight, it is a home of that Eternal Loveliness which breaks the heart—and mends it. For an hour before the service I sat thinking of the mighty dead who sleep there—thinking how those pillars have stood through all the nights and days, through peace and war, for ages. Truly, “time, the white god, makes all things holy, and what is old becomes religion.” I sat in the Poet's Corner, where Tennyson sleeps side by side with Browning, and the effigy of Shakespeare has the bust of Burns near by. What a wonderful organ, now soft as the prayer of a child, now eloquent as thunder in the mountains. If one cannot pray in Westminster Abbey, where men have prayed for centuries, and where the echoes of voices long hushed still cling to its arches, he cannot pray at all. Who can measure the influence of such a building, enshrining so many historic memories, the dust of great men, and the tradition of ages of patri-

otism and prayer! It stands for order in the streets, for order in the land, for order in the secret places of the soul.

*July 2nd:*—On a white marble tablet in the vestibule of the City Temple are recorded some of the traditions of the church, as follows: “The church assembling here was founded in 1640 by the Rev. Thomas Goodwin, D.D., preacher of the council of state, president of Magdalen College, Oxford; member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell. The church first met in Anchor Lane, Thames street; thence removed in 1672 to Paved Alley, Lime street; thence in 1675 to Miles Lane; thence in 1766 to Camomile street; from thence in 1819, under the ministry of Rev. John Clayton, to Poultry, Cheapside, and thence in 1873, under the ministry of Joseph Parker, D.D., to the southwestern end of Holborn Viaduct. This tablet is erected to perpetuate the memory of her venerable and illustrious founder.”

It is not the oldest church of its faith in London, but it is to-day, as in the days of its forefathers, a fountain-head of fraternal righteousness, religious freedom, and national inspiration. The City Temple, as it now stands, was opened on May 19th, 1874, exactly one year after the corner stone was laid; and it is not only spacious—seating nearly three thousand—but responsive to the slightest inflection from the communion altar to the frescoed panels near the roof, whence the mighty names of the leaders of the Free Churches in English history—Cromwell, Bunyan, Wesley, Whitefield, and Spurgeon—look down to awe and to inspire. As I climbed its long, winding pulpit stairs yesterday, I thought of all who have knelt in that Place of Hearing, and they seemed to have left something of themselves in return for the blessing they received.

*July 8th.*—By the kindness of a Member of Parliament, I attended a sitting of the House of Commons to-day—having first been shown the beauties of the Parliament Buildings. It was most interesting, the more because we have nothing in our American Congress like the Question Hour. Any member can ask the Government any question, for information or opinion, and that offers critics full opportunity for grilling their opponents. The Irish, especially, are in their glory at Question time. They have sharp tongues, as when one asked a member of the Government if he was not aware that the House of Lords “is a cross between a morgue and an old curiosity shop.” My impression of the hour was that only two questions were asked from a real desire for information.

The air of the House seemed tense, and in the debate which followed the Question Hour it was surcharged with electricity. The debate had to do with Ireland, in regard to which the Government was accused of treachery; and there were echoes of the Easter rebellion. John Redmond spoke very ably, but as a broken-hearted man, I thought. The tone of hopelessness was unmistakable. He was followed by Sir Edward Carson, a bull-dog kind of man, in whom one felt something hard, unyielding, ungracious. It was a rare treat to hear the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith—a short, firmly built man, with white hair, ruddy face, and blue eyes. His manner was tantalisingly deliberate, as if he were weighing each word with care; his style lucid and lawyer-like, with no gleam of fire. Mr. Balfour was very impressive. Tall, graceful, with beautiful dark eyes, he spoke with a dignity, a finish, a courtesy, an ease which captivated the House. After the debate we took tea on the Terrace, where I met a number of distinguished Members, among them John Burns, with whom it was a joy to talk on the banks of the river which he once described as “Liquid ‘istory.”

*July 10th.*—Until recently, it seems, there has been very little interest in America in England, outside official circles—save an amused interest of those who affect to think our Republic a Cub of the British Lion. The characteristic attitude is that nothing worthy of attention has ever been done or said off this Island. This attitude lingers—by force of habit—though the war has shaken it, temporarily. At tea to-day Charles Garvice, the story-writer, put it aptly: “It would not be a bad thing if we abandoned the habit of behaving as if God first made Englishmen and then, in a moment of aberration, created the rest of mankind out of what was left over.” No doubt he is right in saying that the arrogance of the English is largely unconscious—due, he thinks, to the influence of the Public Schools, which are not public at all in our sense, but aristocratic and exclusive. Anyway, it is unfortunate. Often I think the most deadly word in English is, “*Really*,” and the peculiar inflection with which it is uttered. As one first hears it, it is an audible sneer, freezing the genial currents of the soul. It takes time to learn that it has no such meaning, but is a kind of shield to protect the native reserve and dislike of emotion.

After all, there is a deep difference between Englishmen and Americans—a difference quickly felt, but hard to define. It belongs to the region of temperament—far below variations of manner, custom, and accent. Our ideas and institutions are much the same, but there is a distinct difference in emphasis and interpretation. One feels this difference in many details everywhere, and it makes one ask the question: do we, can we understand each other? How can an Oxford Don and a Hoosier school-master ever know one another? One is reticent—did not Heine say that silence is “conversation with an Englishman?”—incased in pretended indifference; the other frank, talkative, approachable, and approaching.

Yet they are the same kind of men living in different environments, moulded by divergent developments. Just now, of course, there is irritation against America, and the average Briton thinks we have betrayed humanity for dollars—knowing nothing of our history, policy, or spirit. But when that has passed away—if it ever does—will there ever be real understanding between us?

*July 15th:*—A soldier has been explaining to me the extraordinary medley of humour, prayer and profanity so common at the Front. All blasphemy, he argued, implies a kind of belief; no man to-day takes the name of Odin in vain. The man in the trenches who breaks out in thrilling blasphemies against God and Christianity and the parsons, means nothing personal. It is merely the contradiction of Christ and the Kaiser that is twisting his insides, as if he said to himself, “I believe in God Almighty—and my pal, a good-living lad, has just been blown to bits; God is love—and the Boches crucified the sergeant-major; peace on earth—and I stuck one through with my bayonet, and this d—— war never ends.” How the tears must stand bright in the eyes of the Master, as He hears it all. If He sometimes sobs, He must sometimes laugh the large, loving laughter of God. If those lads could see Him they would say: “Sorry, Sir; we did not, of course, mean it. We will carry on.” In the same way he interprets the unnatural gaiety which has puzzled so many. Men in the trenches learn to live a moment at a time—they may not be alive the next moment—and the reaction is an explosion of “insane gaiety.” Pent up feeling must find vent, and the more rollicking the farce at the theatre, the greater the jam. So he explained, and I have seen enough to understand.

*July 22nd:*—What a day of privilege! Lunched with Donald Hankey, whose little book of essays, “A Student in Arms,” is the most inspired interpretation of the pri-

vate soldier yet written. Nor do I wonder at it, after meeting him. Modest, with a hesitating courtesy of address, there is something haunting about the lad, something lovely and simple and strong. He agreed that perhaps he had painted military life in too rosy a colour, and he promised that he would show the other side later. One feels that he knows the way to Emmaus, and that when he wrote of "The Beloved Captain," he wrote out of his heart, as frankly as he talked to me. When I think of a man like that serving as a target for bullets, or floundering in the muddy, lousy trenches, I understand why the boys at the front pray in one breath and swear in the next.

Took tea with Dr. Thomas Masaryk, of Bohemia, formerly member of the Austrian Parliament. He is here in exile with a price on his head. His daughter, Miss Olga, is with him. At the suggestion of mutual Bohemian friends in America, he is a worshipper at the City Temple —albeit a Unitarian in faith. Never in my life have I had a more vivid intuition of the moral greatness of any man. No doubt my long admiration of him prepared the way, but it was an overwhelming impression of character, and of intellectual veracity. If Bohemia wins her freedom, he ought to be the first president. He is not only the greatest living man of his nation—alike for moral idealism and intellectual realism—but he is entitled to all honour by virtue of his service to his people.<sup>1</sup>

*July 24th.*—Went down Dorking way to-day, where the creeping Mole winds its way between Box Hill and the park lands of Norbury. Stopping at the Inn near Burford Bridge—where Stevenson rested for a time, and Keats wrote a part of "Endymion"—my mecca was Box Hill,

<sup>1</sup> Hankey fulfilled his promise to show another side of military life in the second series of "A Student in Arms," published later in the year; but, alas, I read the fatal line, "Killed in action on the Somme, October 12th, 1916." Something high and fine and lovely went with him out of the world. Later I saw much of Dr. Masaryk and his daughter, Miss Olga; and one of the few happy results of a horrible war and an equally horrible peace, was that he was elected President for life of the Czechoslovak Republic.

where Meredith "learned to live much in the spirit and to see the brightness on the other side of life." He was a great teacher for whom life was at once a discipline and a delight—despite its heart-shaking tragedy—and he taught us a brave sanity in gem-like words. By bringing joyous youth and crabbed age together he made the discovery, one of the happiest ever made, that "wits and passions join to rear the temple of the credible God." Over our cheap cynicisms and sickly sentimentalisms he poured showers of silvery laughter; and he knew that there is more wisdom in a whispered prayer than in all the philosophies. The discipline of the body by the mind, loyalty to reason, and altruism for the future of the race—it was a goodly gospel. He lived with "the rapture of the forward view," prophesying of "those nobler races, now dimly imagined." For me his haunts are holy ground, and these are days to remember how, in an hour of desolating bereavement, he found strength and renewal of soul in the vision of a wild cherry tree grappling the rocks and lifting its white banner to the sun. It spoke to him of the divine hope, that, no less than tears, dwells in mortal things.

Full lasting is the song, though he,  
The singer, passes.

*July 26th:*—No one can spend even a few hours in Bedford without knowing that it is the city of John Bunyan. The old idyl of English life, which he wedded to allegory, is still there, though a group of poor women whom I saw sitting at a door in the sun were not talking "about the things of God," like the group engaged in heavenly gossip of whom Bunyan tells in "Grace Abounding." Therein lies a deep difference between his day and our own. One often wonders why Bunyan thought himself such a vile sinner, confessing that he had been both

a liar and a blasphemer. His "lies," I would go bail, were wild fictions told for fun, and his "fancy swearing" must have been a kind of literary safety-valve, in those days when he played cat on Elstow Green. His sinfulness was more imaginative than real, reminding one of the pawky Scot who said of Dr. Alexander Whyte, who dwelt much on the fact of sin, that if he had business dealings with the Doctor, and believed half the evil things he said of himself, the terms would have to be strictly "cash on delivery." Are we worse to-day for not seeing the Abyss open beside our arm-chairs, as Bunyan did? Surely not. Nor does the Christian of to-day start for the City Beautiful alone, leaving his wife and children behind. But the Tinker was a great master of character, and one looks for Bunyan people everywhere, as one looks for Dickens' characters in London. In Bedford his memorials are on every hand. Often I have imagined a meeting between Izaak Walton and Bunyan—two men who were made to like, but not to convert, each other.

*July 27th:*—Spoke to the Press Club to-day noon, giving my impressions of the differences between English and American journalism—Lord Northcliffe presiding. The London papers are small now, to be sure—except *The Times*, which is unique among all the journals of the earth—owing to lack of paper and lack of labour. Half the men from Fleet Street—the Street of Ink—are away at the war. English papers are much better written than our American papers—though our magazine literature is incomparably the best, and better printed. They serve the news in more compact form and more lucid style. Some of the war correspondents are very remarkable, especially Gibbs, in whose articles one feels a touch of a great pity, as of one who writes from the point of view of the lads in the trenches. The editorial page has more influence in England than with us, though it has suffered

decline, I am told, on this side. Men of letters write more frequently for the daily press than in America. Wells, Bennett, Shaw, Chesterton, and Prof. Murray, are frequent contributors on questions of vital public interest. Mr. A. G. Gardiner, of the *Daily News*—who has the distinction of being known by his initials—is perhaps the ablest editorial essayist. We have no one like him, unless it be Henry Watterson. Some of the papers, like the *Morning Post* and *John Bull*, to name two far apart, never miss an opportunity of shooting an arrow of irony at America. Anyway, the press has been very kind to me, excepting a few stray shots by snipers in the penny-dreadfuls.

After a wonderful month—wonderful for me at least—the City Temple church invited me to become its minister; and I took the matter under advisement. Unfortunately the church was divided, not in regard to myself, but concerning issues which had arisen before my name had ever been associated with it. Happily I received another invitation, the acceptance of which was attended by no difficulty of decision. It fluttered down upon my desk from Scotland as follows:

O come awa', O come awa',  
Strang brither o' the West-lan',  
Altho' we hinna meikle gear,  
Yer welcome ter our best, man.  
Auld Scotia's bens an' glens cry oot  
A greetin' tae the West-man,  
An' honest herts an' frien'ly han's  
But wish ye wad then test, man;  
O come awa', syne come awa',  
An' be our luckie guest, man.

How could anyone resist? So I went for a flying visit to Scotland, by way of the flat fields and dingy cities of

the English Midlands; and I do not wonder that Ruskin railed at them. A little way brought us to Rugby; another little way and we were among the slag heaps about Lichfield and Tamworth, where dwell the miners. A row of blackened, stunted trees heralded Crewe, whence we passed over "the peak country" into Yorkshire, and after crossing the wide moorland district of Cumberland, we entered the Eden Valley of "Merrie Carlile." By the time we arrived at Dumfries an old ancestor has risen up in me saying, "This is the place I have been telling you about"—the land of Robert Burns.

Never has there been a hospitality more generous or more genuine; never a courtesy more exquisitely complete in all its details. When I rose to speak in Glasgow a great American flag was unfurled, and the audience sang our national anthem. Alas, it was all too brief a stay, but there was time for a glimpse of Loch Lomond and the Clyde, and it was like an hour of enchantment to see Edinburgh at night. Above, giant searchlights scanned the sky, darting like shining swords through the clouds, as if stabbing at airy enemies, while the moonlight shimmered over the bald-headed hills and filled the valleys with silver. From whatever side one approaches Edinburgh it is singularly picturesque, with its happy blend of hill and sea, of rocky peaks and lofty spires. Having explored the Castle, St. Giles, and Holyrood, I had to hurry away down the East Coast to catch my steamer for America.

At home I found my friends hopelessly divided in counsel; and after an ordeal of indecision I declined the City Temple absolutely. Such a situation would have been formidable enough in my own country, but in another land, and in the midst of a great war, it required courage to consider it at all. Later, in response to an

*ad misericordiam* appeal I sent a letter so qualified that it seemed impossible that it could be interpreted as an acceptance. However, it was so interpreted and announced, and the die was cast.

## **II: Joseph Parker**



## II

### *Joseph Parker*

(It is not inappropriate to include here an impression of the founder and first Minister of the City Temple. The church now known as the City Temple dates back to 1641, its first minister being Dr. Thomas Goodwin, the favourite preacher of Oliver Cromwell. But it owes its present name and location to Dr. Parker, and as such is a monument to his genius. A similar sketch of Dr. R. J. Campbell may be found in a volume entitled, "Some Living Masters of the Pulpit." The present minister of the City Temple is the Rev. F. W. Norwood, of Australia, who succeeded to the pulpit in 1920.)

Unfortunately it was never my privilege to see or hear Joseph Parker, but in the home of my boyhood his name had a place of honour. As his journeys to America did not take him further west than Chicago—where he lectured in Music Hall, and was a guest of David Swing—and never into the South, I was denied what would now be a cherished memory. Unfortunately, too, no adequate biography of him exists, which is matter for deep regret, the more because it is now almost too late for such an appraisal to find response. What is here written, so far from being an estimate, is only a series of impressions derived from his books, from the reports of his friends, and from the atmosphere and tradition of the City Temple, where he is both a legend and a presence.

The City Temple, it need hardly be said, is rich in mementoes of Dr. Parker, the marble mosaic pulpit, a gift of the Corporation of London, being in fact his monument. The pulpit Bible which he used is still there, in a

glass case, open at a fly leaf whereon are written the signatures of eminent men and women and the dates of their visits, among them Beecher, Gladstone, Spurgeon, Lord Shaftesbury, and Frances Willard. A memorial window to Dr. Parker may be seen near the southern end of the west wall of the Temple, and is inscribed with the words: "He was mighty in the scriptures." Another window commemorates the occasion of the one thousandth noonday service held on Thursday, June 30th, 1892, which was perhaps the service which Dr. Parker loved best. A marble bust of him, presented by friends during his lifetime, occupies a pedestal in the vestibule, and near the bust, carved on a block of white marble let into the wall, is the text of the first sermon which he preached in the City Temple: "So Moses finished the work and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." (Ex. 40:33, 34) But more potent than such memorials in stone or brass is the echo of his words in the hearts of men, and the impress of that prodigious personality which found rest only where he could have found it—or wished to find it—in death, at his "Tynhome," Lyndhurst Gardens, Hampstead, Nov. 28th, 1902.

No one questions that Joseph Parker was a great preacher, but we learn very little from that fact, because great preachers are of many kinds; chiefly of two kinds. There is the type represented by men like Robertson and Newman, by Bushnell and Munger, to which we may add Tipple, who preached such sermons as Emerson might have preached had he remained in the pulpit, and whom Ruskin called "the greatest master of pulpit prose."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not much is known of Tipple in America; only his "Spoken Words of Prayer and Praise" has been published here. And such prayers! They are lyrics singing of the love of God and the beauty of His world—sun-bright and attuned to the songs of birds, albeit not lacking in sympathy for the struggle and tragedy of life. He was a tiny wisp of a man, say unspeakably, but with a mind full of benign light, whose genius drew an elect audience, never large, from all parts of London to his little church in Norwood. Only three volumes of his sermons were ever published, "Sunday Mornings at Norwood," "The Admiring Guest," and "Days of Old." Except for an appreciation

This preacher is no striking orator. He can never be popular. He prevails mightily, but it is by the depth and vitality of his ideas, by the intensity and clarity of his vision of God, and by the form and beauty which he presses into the service of his vocation. His power lies wholly in his message and in his high concern to utter it. He influences men deeply, genetically, and remains a fertilising power long after he has passed away, especially among young men caught up into his vision. Joseph Parker, it must be plain, did not belong in that category, but rather to the type represented by Beecher, Spurgeon, Phillips Brooks and David Swing—the orator, “the master of great assemblies, the commander of the assent and homage of the multitude.” This preacher—sometimes a scholar, but seldom a deep thinker—is picturesque and noble, fascinating alike for his power and his charm, and he sways men as the wind sways the clouds. It was to this order of prophecy that Joseph Parker belonged, and his genius was too remarkable to be obscured, albeit marred, at times, by a staginess of manner, a sensationalism of method, and a colossal, but childishly innocent, conceit.

Whatever theory may be held as to the secret of pulpit inspiration and the means of “striking twelve” in every sermon, Dr. Parker never neglected the physical basis of it. Indeed, he had a perfect physique, of giant-like strength, kept taut and firm by a discipline austere in its rigour and regularity; and by this method he not only kept his body under but forged passion into power. The hot bath, the cold shower, the spare meal, the cup of hot beef-tea, all immediately before entering the pulpit, such was his method of securing the physical glow which made

of him which I wrote at the time of his retirement—published in *Unity*, edited by Jenkin Lloyd Jones—I know of nothing else written about him on this side. The right kind of a book about Tipple, with letters and fragments, if any remain, would be a treasure.

the body the fit instrument of the glowing mind : and the old bath-tub is still in the Temple. No man, he was wont to say, ever found the depth of his mind until he had found the length of his body. With body aglow and mind a-glitter, no wonder live messages seemed to come to him and use him as the preacher, rather than the preacher using the messages, and often to his own astonishment. Add the massive leonine head, the deep-set eyes, the face so bright with genius, the dramatic elocution, and the marvellous voice which he knew so well how to use, rich in its risings and fallings, haunting in its flute-like cadences, its soft whisperings, wooings, pleadings, but, if melting in pathos, no less terrible in its thunders, its withering scorn and its scalding sarcasm—and one may doubt if any attentive hearer ever forgot a service in the City Temple.<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, if Dr. Parker had the oddities of genius, he had also its communicativeness, and we know not only the story of his life as told in his "Autobiography"—where fact and fiction are all mixed up—but his method of making and delivering sermons. Indeed, he was always lecturing young preachers, both to their joy and profit, and the burden of his message was, "*Preach the gospel; do not read it!*" Therein he was right, for a preacher is not an author reading his manuscript; he is

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Nicoll, in "Princes of the Church," has a memorable passage descriptive of the preaching of Dr. Parker: "It was a spiritual wonder. There was about it the touch of miracle. Apparently free from rule, it was unconsciously obedient to the great principles of art. As you listened you saw deeper meanings. The horizon lifted, widened, broadened—the preacher has thrust his hand among your heartstrings. You heard the cry of life, and the Christ preached as the answer to that cry. The preacher had every gift. He was mystical, poetical, ironical, consoling, rebuking by turns. Sometimes

As from an infinitely distant land,  
Come airs and floating echoes that convey  
A melancholy into all our day.

The next moment you could not help smiling at some keen witticism. Then he was ironical, and you remembered Heine, and saw that he knew how much irony is mingled by God in the order of His creation. Then tears sprang to your eyes as he pictured the failure of success, and told of the long, triumphant struggle and the victory turned into mourning by the death of the only child. But what description can render, or what analysis explain, the visible inspiration, the touch of fire from heaven?"

a Voice, a Herald, a Fire. When he himself tried to read a sermon, as he did once or twice on special occasions, it was unbearably dull. He seems to have tried all plans of preaching except the *memoriter*, and that he was unable to adopt, sharing with Beecher an inability to commit anything to memory and recall it when needed. What Gladstone was in Parliament, what Wilberforce was on the platform, that, as to extemporaneousness, Parker was in the pulpit. For Dr. Parker, no less than for his audience, a sermon was an adventure; and if he ever arranged for any emotional flights before, he must often have been amazed at the excess beyond what he had prepared. His preparation, however, was strenuous, laborious, thorough, and devout, as to the gathering of his material, but he never knew how much of it might be used, and how much his daimon might add to it. One is first dazzled and then amazed at his epigrams, and if one did not know it to be a fact it would be hard to believe that they were impromptu. Obviously such a method has its advantages, but it has also its deep pitfalls, and if the triumphs of Dr. Parker were superlative his failures were equally gorgeous—leaving him not only bewildered, but solemnly vowing never again to enter a pulpit!

Genius, of course, is a law unto itself; as to method it is enough to say that Dr. Parker, by a process of deep musings, became steeped in the truth he would utter, and the whole man was on fire with the realisation of it. He was not a widely read man, much less a scholar, but he knew the Bible as few men have ever known it, having lived with it until the very soul of the Book seemed to pass into the man, giving to his ministry the background of the Eternal. Surely his feat of expounding the scriptures from end to end, which he left us in "The People's Bible," asked for an industry to match its audacity; but he made the old Book new to thousands of men, equally

in its Divine depth and its vivid human colour. For my part I think he was at his best when dealing with the Memoirs of Nehemiah and the Gospel of Matthew, and he seemed always to excel in the portrayal of tragic, stormy men like David; as Newman was most at home with the cunning Jacob. As he entered the pulpit from studies such as these, men felt that he was a man suffused with a sense of the Unseen; and it was this that created the ample atmosphere in which the myriad significances of earth fell into their natural insignificance. How often the word "ineffable" was upon his lips, revealing a mind to which the Bible was not simply the literature of a people which were of old, but the Book of the Presence.

For many it was not in the sermons of Dr. Parker, but in his prayers—mighty in their sense of the Eternal, yet withal so richly human—that he seemed most transfigured. The penetrating awe felt by the devout Roman Catholic at the elevation of the Host was not more profound than the awe felt by the sincere worshipper in the City Temple, when Dr. Parker called his people to prayer. "Let us pray," was always followed by the drawing aside of the veil which curtains us within Time, and all were alike needy souls in the presence of the Eternal—like doves at the prophet's window. "O Lord, make us so much like Jesus as to be mistaken for Him," may be an impossible prayer in its literal sense, but it is a perfect expression of the most eager yearning of Christian aspiration. How tender and poignant was the petition he offered after the loss of her whom he called his "other self," and whom he loved just short of idolatry: "O Thou Man of Five Wounds, say to our withering humanity: I am the Resurrection and the Life!" None could say with more pathos, "O Lord, help us to gather a few roses while passing through the wilderness." His prayers revealed how deeply his mind was steeped in the imagery and idiom of the

Bible, which had become the dialect of his own soul; and he helped many an inarticulate man to utter those longings for God which well up in every human heart, but which so few can ever express.<sup>1</sup>

Few people suspect, much less realise, how much a man of the pulpit preaches to himself, and what a struggle goes on in the lonely places of his own soul in respect of the faith that makes us faithful. With some it is a moral struggle, with others intellectual difficulty, and not a few men of saintly character and unchallenged faith have remained intellectually uncertain to the end. They walked by faith, not by knowledge. "Rabbi" Duncan, of Edinburgh, called himself to the last an intellectual sceptic. Life had for him on one side a precipice, down to the abysses, but on the other side his feet were on the rock; and that rock was experience. It is still a matter of debate as to whether Newman was not in intellect a sceptic, as in heart he was a mystic. So it was with Joseph Parker, in whose life even a casual student must feel the stress and strain of a struggle never adjourned; and if he did not become a saint, he had it in him to be a great sinner, as well as a thorough-going sceptic. Even to the very last, if he had his mountain moments when he could see afar, and when the rivers were but threadlets in the valley, he had also his dismal hours—"an atheism within a theism," as he called it—when he was not only a doubter, but a rebel. Such struggles made him a helper of others who were not strong swimmers, and if he had great compassion it was because he knew that every man fights a hard fight—often against heavy odds.

The very massiveness of the man made his eccentricities, to say nothing of his faults, so conspicuous as

<sup>1</sup> Nearly all the prayers of Dr. Parker were published, accompanying his sermons. He also prepared "The People's Family Prayer Book," in connection with "The People's Bible," but it does not seem to have been widely used. I know not how many men told me that they learned to pray from Dr. Parker—often reading his prayers on their knees.

to be easily exaggerated out of all proportion. Yet it is true to say that a ministry fertile in its resource and fruitful in its influence was disfigured by grave defects. His lust for publicity, the manner in which he trounced his audiences about money, together with not a few unfor-givable atrocities against every ideal of good taste in pulpit decorum, not only limited his power but injured the City Temple. Such things made good copy for the press—as when he damned the Sultan, and the evening papers came out with the headline, “The Swearing Parson”—but in the minds of many thoughtful people they created an impression of the City Temple as a place where one might expect any kind of a “stunt”; and unhappily that tradition still haunts it. The irritation aroused by pigmy critics was astonishing in one so strong and self-reliant, and often a fiery postcard was penned in reply, only to be quietly burned by his wife—who, fortunately, did not destroy that letter to a man who demurred to some remark of his about Aaron’s Calf, and whose initials happened to be “A. C.” It was from the heart that he prayed: “O Lord, save us from the insanity of defending ourselves”; and he might with wisdom have adopted the motto which Jay of Bath learned from Wilberforce: “Never complain, never explain.”<sup>1</sup> His impatience with differing opinion was never more unhappily shown than at the close of a conference of workingmen whom he had invited to meet him and give their reasons for not going to church. After hearing their reasons he concluded the conference by telling them that “the more he heard their opinions, the more he thought of his own.”

No sooner had I taken up my work at the City Temple than I began to hear, or to receive by letter, all kinds

<sup>1</sup> Still, I confess to a certain sympathy with the impatience of Dr. Parker, having had experience of the City Temple, whose minister needs not only the faith of a saint and the patience of Job, but the skin of a rhinoceros; and not one of them so far has been so armoured.

of memories and incidents about Dr. Parker, some of which I venture to record here. They show many sides of the man, his quick-darting insight, his aptness in illustration, his homiletic ingenuity, his vanity and his humility, his humour and his pathos. Hundreds of ministers attended the City Temple, especially at the Thursday noon service, often to get a "tip" for a sermon, it may be, and they not infrequently found it in an aside of the preacher as he read the scriptures. Even of the noblest preachers we must say that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels," but God used his servant Joseph Parker as an instrument through which, as from the sky, men heard rebuke for sin, comfort in sorrow, inspiration in bewilderment, and the truth that lights our human way at eventide. Some memories are as follows:

In reading Gal. 6:3, "For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," the preacher added, *and nobody else!*

"Twenty years ago," writes a minister, "I attended a morning service at the City Temple. I have forgotten everything I heard at the service except one sentence in Dr. Parker's prayer. In thanking God for His love, he paused, and in a voice like a trumpet he exclaimed: 'What is Hell itself but a dying spark in the amplitude of Thy radiant Kingdom!'"

At a club dinner one of the speakers asserted that Christianity had done very little for mankind. For his part he believed that *gas* had been a greater benefit. Cries of "Shame" were heard, upon which Dr. Parker, a guest of the evening, rose, and said: "Hush! Do not quarrel with our friend. He is stating his belief. Now I, when I am nearing my latter end, will call for the consolations of the Christian religion; but our friend here, on his death-bed, will send for the gasman."

"Twelve years ago I was privileged to hear Dr. Parker

put the Gospel in a nutshell, in his own unique manner, in the following scintillating epigram: 'All man's religion, without exception, is man seeking after God. Christianity is God seeking man.' It solved a doubt and put me on the track of truth."

"Once I heard Dr. Parker read, as one of the Scripture lessons, the eighth chapter of Romans, from the 35th verse: 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' As he reached the thirty-eighth verse, his voice rose in triumphant tones, thrilling the audience as he said, 'Neither death, nor life, nor any created thing': then, closing the Bible sharply, he looked straight at the audience and said, '*Perhaps something less.*' The effect was difficult to describe."

A poor woman came to the Thursday noon service bringing her little child with her. The child could not be kept still during the sermon, but would keep up his pretty, winsome prattle, and at last the mother, fearing to disturb others near her, got up, and was making her way along the aisle when Dr. Parker detected her, and said: "I will not have you leave this service with that little child. We need the child in the midst. We don't know a word that he is saying, but we do know that it is all true!" Who but his celestial daimon could have thought of that, and it was a sermon in itself.

Dr. Maclaren and Dr. Parker were once in the pulpit of the City Temple together, and it was a majestic sight. Dr. Parker, in his inimitable way, described the effect upon himself years before, when he heard that Dr. Maclaren was likely to come to London. The only thing for him "was to resign his pulpit and leave the country." Then he said: "The guillotine is erected; the victim is strapped upon its bed; the blade gleams and falls; the head is in the basket! So with all other preachers when Maclaren gets up." Thus the giants praise each other.

An Anglican clergyman says he was in the City Temple one Thursday and heard the following: "There are three great preachers in the nineteenth century, Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and I need not name the third." It seemed incredible to me, but having related it to several of my friends, they tell me that it is actually mild compared with what they have heard with their own ears.

"Since my boyhood," says a letter from Wales, "I have remembered some sentences of a sermon Dr. Parker delivered in the City Temple in the mid-seventies. The question of the sermon was: 'Does God Forsake the Righteous?' and in the course of it the preacher described the house of a poor widow. He spoke of it as a place 'out of which even a sheriff's officer could not take more than a shadow, and would not take that because he could not sell it.' The preacher himself had been sorely beset, for he remarked 'I have been as nearly forsaken as any man in the world. I have looked around on all sides, but could see no way out—no lateral way, *only a vertical one!*' What a phrase!"

"Never can I forget the manner in which Dr. Parker once repeated the parable of the Prodigal Son. Without giving chapter or verse he simply began, 'A certain man had two sons,' and when he had finished he said: 'Ah, I saw you as you left home this morning. There was a tap at the window in the nursery, and a little face and a waving hand; and as your hand was on the gate you looked up and met the gaze of your little son. Yes, I saw you, and God saw you, and there was joy in heaven because the love in your heart for that little boy was a faint reflection of the Heavenly Father's love for you.' Many heads were bowed, as when a wind touches a field of ripening grain."

From the funeral of his mother a man went to the City

Temple, trying to pray in the awful stillness which death makes when it passes by. Dr. Parker took for his text the words of Jesus at parting from his friends: "I will see you again." Write the text, he said, on the pillow as they go from us—yes, and on our own pillow in the long, lonely nights that follow—write it in the chamber where the separation took place: "I will see you again." Never mind how, when, or where. At least one man went away feeling that he had heard, as it were, a voice from behind the hills.

Here are three examples of the unexpectedness of his homiletic divination. (1) At a time when creeds seemed to be breaking up and going to pieces, he took his text from the shipwreck of St. Paul, telling how they escaped; "And some on broken pieces of the ship." If you cannot have a whole ship, he said, one plank is enough to get to shore on—faith in God, trust in Christ. (2) When there was much talk about education, he took a familiar text but gave it his own emphasis: "Train up a child in the way *he* should go," and discoursed of temperament in education. Each child is different; no two can be trained alike. (3) An unforgettable sermon on "Personality" had for its text: "And it was noised that he was in the house." No matter, he said, who else was there; Jesus filled the house.

On the evening of July 21st, 1891, in his valedictory address at the close of the first International Congregational Council, in the City Temple, Dr. Parker said: "The place whereon we stand is holy ground. Within easy sight of our front door Richard Baxter entered into the Saint's Everlasting Rest. Within a stone's throw of our front door John Bunyan fell asleep in Jesus. Within twice the distance Smithfield reminds us that above this very spot the smoke of the torment of martyrs hovered like a cloud of blessing. Within the same distance the

old Fleet Prison stood where doomed martyrs confronted one another in tender triumphant prayer. This is the place, then, beyond all other places for us to enter into holy covenant: ‘We’re the sons of sires that baffled crowned and mitred tyranny!’”

How much, if any, of the writings of Joseph Parker will endure no one may predict, except to say that in no published sermon will one look in vain for a nugget of gold. Often I look into the rich, mellow volumes of “The City Temple Pulpit,” in which are to be found the ripest sermons of his life, between 1898 and 1902, just before he began to break up and go to pieces; and their suggestiveness seems inexhaustible. Time, of course, will test his work, and if it reveals some wood, hay and stubble, it will also preserve much gold and precious stone. Often it was said that he had the talent of an actor, and that had he taken to the stage he might have been a rival of his friend, Sir Henry Irving. But that is manifestly a judgment without discrimination, since acting and oratory are two different things, as Joseph Jefferson has taught us in an essay which deserves a place among the finest philosophic distinctions. Often, too, Dr. Parker was called the Beecher of England, but he was very unlike the pastor of Plymouth Church, lacking that rich, warm, abounding human love which saved his humour from satire and made his theology poetry. If Parker was a trumpet, Beecher was an orchestra.



### *III: The City Temple*



### III

#### *The City Temple*

*May 14th, 1917.*—At sea on the *Orduna*, nearing the war-zone. The first Hospital Unit of the American Army is on board, but so far we have had no naval escort. It is rumoured that we are to meet Destroyers at a certain place of rendezvous, but whether they are to be American or British we do not know. Of course, we naturally hope they will be American, as this Hospital Unit is an advance company of the Army. Up early to see if our escort has arrived, for the captain has been sailing for two days by dead reckoning under grey skies. Every pair of glasses on board scanned the sky-line. At last a tiny speck appeared on the grey, fluffy sea, but we could not tell what flag it flew. Nearer it came, pitching like a Texas pony among the white-caps—all watching intently in the dawn. Finally a little nurse descried the Stars and Stripes; then others saw it, and instantly all began to sing, “Oh, say, can you see by the dawn’s early light!” Our hearts were full to breaking, our eyes were wet with tears; it was a moment when patriotism and religion were one.

*May 17th.*—Again London! If I had been set down here from anywhere, or from nowhere, I should have known that it is “ye olde London town,” where all things turn to the left, as they do in the “Inferno” of Dante. And how quiet! Compared with the din of New York, or the hideous nightmare of the Chicago loop, London is as quiet as a country village. There are no sky-scrapers

to be seen, but the picture spread out like a panorama from Primrose Hill is not to be forgotten. Slowly it works its ancient spell,—equally on long sun-drenched afternoons, and on those pensive evenings of not insistent rain,—everywhere the hauntings of history, everywhere the stir and throb of history in the making. From a low, dim sky a gentle rain was falling when I arrived, and a soft wind, burdened with a damp fragrance, came as a delicate promise of the purity at the heart of things. Along the aloof avenues of the rich, and the drab streets of the poor, that little wind wandered, like a breath of God bringing a sudden tenderness and sad beauty to an imaginative soul. At such times the essential spirit of London is revealed,—its mysterious promise of half-hidden things becoming almost palpable,—and I feel strangely at home in its quiet excitement, its vivid stimulations, and its thousand evocative appeals. London has seen war before; it is a very old city, weary with much experience, and willing to forgive much because it understands much.

Yes, it is London; but the question is, Which London is it? For there are many Londons—the London of the Tower and the Abbey, of Soho and the Strand, of Downing Street and Whitechapel, of Piccadilly and Leicester Square. There is the London of Whittington and his Cat, of Goody Two-shoes and the Canterbury Shades, of Shakespeare and Chatterton, of Nell Gwynne and Dick Steele—aye, the London of all that is bizarre in history and strange in romance. They are all here, in this gigantic medley of past and present, of misery and magnificence. Sometimes, for me, it is hard to know which holds closest, the London of fiction or the London of fact, or the London of literature, which is a blending of both. Anyway, as I see it, Goldsmith carouses with Tom Jones, and Harry Fielding discusses philosophy with the Vicar of Wakefield; Nicholas Nickleby makes bold to speak to

Mr. W. M. Thackeray, and to ask his favour in behalf of a poor artist of the name of Turner; and "Boz," as he passes through Longacre, is tripped up by the Artful Dodger, and falls into the arms of St. Charles Lamb on his way to call on Lady Beatrix Esmond. No doubt my London is in large part a dream, but it is most enchanting.

*May 20th.*—Attended the King's Weigh House Church to-day,—made famous by Dr. Binney,—and heard Dr. Orchard preach. He is an extraordinary preacher, of vital mind, of authentic insight, and of challenging personality. From an advanced liberal position he has swung toward the Free Catholicism, and by an elaborate use of symbols is seeking to lead men by the sacramental approach to the mystical experience. Only a tiny wisp of a man, seldom have I heard a preacher more searching, more aglow with the divine passion. He does not simply kindle the imagination : he gives one a vivid sense of reality. He has a dangerous gift of humour, which often sharpens into satire, but he uses it as a whip of cords to drive sham out of the temple. He said that preaching in the Anglican Church "is really worse than necessary," and he was sure that in reordination it is not enough for the bishop to lay his hands on the preacher; the servant-girl and the tram-driver ought also to add their consecration. With his face alight he cried, "You need Christ, and I can give Him to you." Surely that is the ultimate grace of the pulpit. It recalled the oft-repeated record in the Journal of Wesley, in respect to the companies to whom he preached: "I gave them Christ." It was not merely an offer: it was a sacrament of communication.

How beautiful is the spirit of reverence which pervades an English church service, in contrast with the too free and informal air of our American worship. The sense of awe, of quiet, of yearning prayer, so wistfully poignant in these days, makes an atmosphere most favourable to

inspiration and insight. It makes preaching a different thing. In intellectual average and moral passion there is little difference between English and American preaching, but the emphasis is different. The English preacher seeks to educate and edify his people in the fundamentals of their faith and duty; the American preacher is more intent upon the application of religion to the affairs of the moment. The Englishman goes to church, as to a house of ancient mystery, to forget the turmoil of the world, to be refreshed in spirit, to regain the great backgrounds of life, against which to see the problems of the morrow. It has been said that the distinctive note of the American pulpit is vitality; of the English pulpit, serenity. Perhaps each has something to learn from the other.

*May 27th:*—No man may ever hope to receive a warmer welcome than was accorded me upon my return to the City Temple, and it was needed. Something like panic seized me, perhaps because I did not realise the burden I was asked to bear until I arrived at the Temple. Putting on the pulpit gown of Joseph Parker was enough to make a young man nervous, but I made the mistake of looking through a peep-hole which he had cut in the vestry door, the better to see the size of his audiences. The Temple was full clean back to the “Rocky Mountains,” as the top gallery is called—a sea of faces in the area, and clouds of faces above. It was terrifying. Pacing the vestry floor in my distress, I thought of all the naughty things the English people are wont to say about American speakers—how we talk through the nose, and the like. My sermon, and almost my wits, began to leave me. There was a vase of flowers on the vestry desk, and in the midst of my agony, as I bent over it to enjoy the fragrance, I saw a dainty envelope tucked down in it. Lifting it out, I saw that it was addressed to me, and, opening it, this is what I read:—

*Welcome! God bless you. We have not come to criticise, but to pray for you and pray with you.—THE CITY TEMPLE CHURCH.*

At once all my nervousness was forgotten; and if that day was a victory, it was due, not to myself, but to those who knew that I was a stranger in a strange land, and whose good-will made me feel at home in a Temple made mellow by the richness of its experience, like an old violin which remembers all the melodies it has heard.

*May 28th:*—Every day, almost anywhere, one sees a little tragedy of the war. Here is an example. Scene I: a tube train standing at Blackfriars Station. Enter a tired-looking man with a 'cello in its cumbrous case. He sinks heavily into a seat and closes his eyes. People passing stumble against his instrument and are, in about equal numbers, apologetic, annoyed, and indifferent. Enter a tall New Zealander. He sits opposite the tired 'cellist, and looks lovingly at the instrument. Scene II: the same, four stations west. The New Zealander rises to leave the car. The musician looks up, and his eyes meet those of the soldier. The latter smiles faintly, trying to be light-hearted, and pointing to the 'cello-case, says: "No more of that for me. It was my favourite instrument." He goes out, and the 'cellist sees that his right sleeve is empty. He flushes slightly and, after a moment, blows his nose defiantly, looking round furtively to see if anyone has had the indecency to notice his emotion. No one has.

*June 4th:*—Went down to-day to see White Horse Hill, near Uffington, and lay for hours on the June grass near the head of that huge horse carved in the chalk. What a superb panorama of Southern, Western, and Midland shires lay spread out, with the Hampshire and Wiltshire downs to the south, clipped out on the skyline. Just below is the vale of White Horse, which Michael Drayton, no mean judge of such matters, held to be the queen

of English vales. The great creating tide of summer is nearing its zenith. Everything is brimming over with sap, scent, and song. Yet one is conscious of the infinitely old all around, of the remote and legendary. The Horse himself, for instance—who cut him out of the turf? When? To what heroic or religious end? There is nothing to tell us. How different Nature is in a land where man has mingled his being with hers for countless generations; where every field is steeped in history and every crag is ivied with legend. Such places give me a strange sense of kinship with the dead, who were not as we are; the “long, long dead, the men who knew not life in towns, and felt no strangeness in sun and wind and rain.” Uffington Castle, with its huge earth walls and ditches, is near by. Perhaps the men of the Stone Age fortified it. Perhaps King Alfred fought the Danes there. Nobody knows, and a day in June is no time to investigate. But what is that faint, rhythmic throb? The guns in France!

*June 9th.*—Spent yesterday afternoon and evening at the country house of Lord and Lady M——, with an oddly assorted group of journalists, labour leaders, socialists, radicals, conservatives, moderates, and what not. It was a rainbow club, having all colours of opinion, and yet, as Carlyle said of his talk with Sterling, “except in opinion not disagreeing.” They discussed many matters, formally on the lawn, or informally in groups, with freedom, frankness, and thoroughness. They were not afraid of names or labels. They cracked the nut of every kind of idea and got the kernel. The war, of course, was a topic, but more often the background of other topics, in the light and shadow of which many issues were discussed, such as Ireland, Anglo-American relations, industrial democracy, socialism, religion, and the like. The Government was mercilessly criticised—not merely abused, but dealt

with intelligently, with constructive suggestion, and all in good spirit. Try to imagine such discussions at a dinner-table on Fifth Avenue.

It was a revelation to me, showing that there is more freedom of thought in England than in America. Liberty, in fact, means a different thing in England from what it does with us. In England it signifies the right to think, feel, and act differently from other people; with us it is the right to develop according to a standardised attitude of thought or conduct. If one deviates from that standard, he is scourged into line by the lash of opinion. We think in a kind of lock-step movement. Nor is this conformity imposed from without. It is inherent in our social growth and habit. An average American knows ten times as many people as the average Englishman, and talks ten times as much. We are gregarious; we gossip; and because everyone knows the affairs of everyone else, we are afraid of one another. For that reason, even in time of peace, public opinion moves with a regimented ruthlessness unknown in England where the majority has no such arrogant tyranny as it has with us.

*June 11th.*—More than once recently I have heard Dr. Forsyth lecture, and I am as much puzzled by his speaking as I have long been by his writing. Each time I found myself interested less in his thesis than in the curiously involved processes of his mind. It is now several years since I read his famous article on "The Lust for Lucidity," a vice, if it is a vice, of which his worst enemy, if he has an enemy, would never think of accusing him. It is indeed strange. I have read everything Dr. Forsyth has written about the Cross, and yet I have no idea of what he means by it. As was said of Newman, his single sentences are lucid, often luminous,—many of them, indeed, glittering epigrams,—but the total result

is a fog, like a Scottish mist hovering over Mount Calvary. One recalls the epigram of Erasmus about the divines of his day, that "they strike the fire of subtlety from the flint of obscurity." Just when one expects Dr. Forsyth to extricate his thought, he loses himself in the mystic void of evangelical emotion. But perhaps it is my fault. When he writes on other subjects—on literature and art, especially—he is as inspiring as he is winsome.

*June 14th:*—To-day was a soft, hazy day, such as one loves in London; and suddenly, at noon, there was a rain of air-raid bombs. The explosions were deafening. Houses trembled, windows rattled or were shattered—and it was all over. Throngs of people soon filled the streets, grave, silent, excited, but with no signs of panic. Quickly ambulances were moving hither and yon. Not far from the City Temple I saw a cordon formed by police joining hands at the doorway of a shattered house, as the dead and mutilated—one little girl with her leg blown off—were being cared for. Calm good-nature prevailed. Officials were courteous and firm. Everybody was kind, helpful, practical. Even the children, darting to and fro, seemed not to be flustered at all. I find it difficult to describe, much less to analyse, my own reaction. I seemed to be submerged in a vast, potent tide of emotion,—neither fear, nor anger, nor excitement,—in which my will floated like a tiny boat on a sea. There was an unmistakable current of thought, how engendered and how acting I know not; but I was inside it and swept along by it. While my mind was alert, my individuality seemed to abdicate in favour of something greater than itself. I shall never forget the sense of unity and fusion of purpose, a wave of common humanity, which drew us all together in a trustful and direct comradeship.

*June 18th:*—Met H. G. Wells at lunch to-day, his

invitation being a response to my sermon on his book, "God, the Invisible King." He entered with a jiggling sort of gait, perspiring profusely,—in fact, doing everything profusely,—all fussed up about the heat, saying that he feared it would exterminate him. In personal appearance he is not distinguished, except his eyes, where one divines the strength of the man. Eager, friendly, companionable, his talk, thinly uttered, is not unlike his writing—vivid, stimulating, at times all-questioning. Just now he is all aglow with his discovery of God, "the happy God of the heart," to use his words. He looked surprised when I suggested that he had found what the Bible means by the Holy Spirit, as if he had thought his discovery entirely new. What if this interesting man,—whose genius is like a magic mirror reflecting what is in the minds of men before they are aware of it themselves,—so long a member of the Sect of Seekers, should join the Fellowship of the Finders. Stranger things have happened, but his rushing into print with his discovery fills me with misgiving. The writing man is an odd species, but I recall the saying of the Samoan chief to the missionary: "We know that at night Some One goes by among the trees, but we never speak of it." Anyway, we had a nutritious time.

Two ministers have just told me how, at a meeting of ministers some time ago, which they attended, a resolution was offered, and nearly passed, to the effect that not one of them would darken the doors of the City Temple during my ministry. My visitors told it with shame, confessing that they, too, had been prejudiced against me as an American. It recalled how, thirty years ago, when Dr. John Hall was called to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, he received a letter from an American friend saying, "You will find a prejudice against you in the minds of some of the smaller men here. It is natural

that they should feel slighted by a call being given to you, a foreigner, which to some extent will be strengthened by the prejudice against Irishmen in particular." Evidently human nature is much the same on both sides of the sea; but that was long ago, and our two countries were not then allies in the great war. I do not recall that in recent years any British minister working in America —of whom there are many, but not half enough—has had to face such a feeling.

*July 1st.*—To-day is the anniversary of the opening of the Battle of the Somme, and *The Times* has three columns of closely printed In Memoriam notices, to read which is like listening to a requiem—like those imploring voices that cry and wail in the opening bars of the Dead March in "Saul." Who can measure the depths of such grief! In the City Temple, at times, I can feel the ache of it, especially in the moment of prayer when men and women, deeply wounded, seek the final consolation of God. The end of every day finds my heart sore, drained dry of every drop of sympathy it can hold. Yet, as the Dead March ends in an outburst of exultation, so in these memorial notices in *The Times* the trumpet of triumph sounds above the sob of sorrow. Again and again a new word appears: "In *proud* and loving memory"; and three times this text is quoted in a spirit of heavenly paradox: "He asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, even length of days forever more." No, no; on this day a year ago the lads of the Somme did not die; they rest with King Arthur in Avalon, beyond the night and the sea.

*July 4th.*—Lectured in the City Temple last night on Lincoln, and I have never had quite such a response anywhere. It is through Lincoln that I wish to reveal the soul of America—for in that tall, angular, homely, heroic figure the spirit of our Republic found incarnation, as in no other. Washington was an English gentleman,

before he became an American; but Lincoln grew up in the back yard of the nation, so to speak, and embodies what is most characteristic of our genius. No wonder something of mystery, a strange, pervasive appeal to the latent greatness in us all, a sanctity, half tragic and half triumphant, lingers about the memory of such a man. If anyone would know what America means, let him look into the face of Lincoln—so rugged, so human, so strong, written all over with the hieroglyphics of sorrow, yet with lines where laughter fell asleep when it was weary. There, in those deep-set grey eyes—the prophet's grey—that never lie, in the suggestion of a smile with tears in it, in features marked by hard struggle, the light of high resolve, and the touch of a great pity, all may see what America is, what made it, and what it prophesies for the world. It is a face neither rudely masculine nor softly feminine, but which has something that suggests the mother and the boy behind the man; something which tells us what lies in the souls of the lowliest; something of the cost of all progress; yea, something of the worth and meaning of noble human living.

*July 18th:*—Joined the Bishop of London at luncheon with the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, and he was much interested in the ministry of my colleague, Miss Maude Royden. The two grave questions in his mind seemed to be, first, does she actually stand in the pulpit where I stand when I preach? second, does she wear a hat? If I had to wear the gaiters of the Bishop of London, I should be concerned, not about Miss Royden's hat, but about what she is doing with the brains under her hat. Like John Wesley, she may remain all her days in the Anglican fold, but she will be there only in her private capacity, and her influence will be centrifugal. The Bishop, moreover, though his foresight is not abnormal, ought to suspect the existence of the forces

gathering about the greatest woman preacher of our generation outside his jurisdiction. Had he been wise, instead of leaving her to consort with feminists, intellectuals, and social revolutionaries outside the church, he would have set her the task of bringing them inside. As it is, the little dark woman in the big white pulpit is a note of interrogation to the future of the Church of England, and the sign of its failure to meet a great movement; but the Bishop can see nothing but her hat!

Frail of figure, slight unspeakably, with a limp in her gait, as a speaker Miss Royden is singularly effective in her simplicity and directness.<sup>1</sup> There is no shrillness in her eloquence, no impression of strain. In style conversational rather than oratorical, she speaks with the inevitable ease of long practice. Some of her epigrams are unforgettable in their quick-sighted summing up of situations; as when she said recently in the Royal Albert Hall: "The Church of England is the Conservative Party at prayer." She is an authority on all matters pertaining to woman and child, holding much the same position in England that Miss Jane Addams has long held in America. Untrained in theology,—which some hold to be an advantage,—she deals with the old issues of faith as an educated, spiritually minded woman in sensitive contact with life, albeit casting aside the muffled Christianity" that Wells once described as the religion of the well-to-do classes. Not the least important part of her work is what I call her "clinic"; her service as a guide, confidant, and friend to hundreds of women, and as confessor to not a few. Here she does what no man may ever hope to do, doubly so at a time when England is a world of women who are entering upon a life new, strange, and difficult. As she remains a loyal Anglican, at least we are giving an example

<sup>1</sup> For a further appreciation of Miss Royden and her ministry, see a volume entitled, "Some Living Masters of the Pulpit."

of that Christian unity of which we hear so much and see so little.

*July 20th:*—How childish people can be, especially Britishers and Americans when they begin to compare the merits and demerits of their respective lands. Each contrasts what is best in his country with what is worst in the other, and both proceed upon the idea that difference is inferiority. It would be amusing, if it were not so stupid. One sees so much of it, now that our troops are beginning to arrive in small detachments, and it is so important that contacts should be happy. As it is, Americans and Englishmen look at each other askance, like distant cousins who have a dim memory that they once played and fought together, and are not sure that they are going to be friends. Both are thin-skinned, but their skins are thick and thin in different spots, and it takes time and tact to learn the spots. Each says the wrong thing at the right time. Our men are puzzled at the reticence of the English, mistaking it for snobbishness or indifference. The English are irritated at the roars of laughter that our boys emit when they see the diminutive “goods” trains and locomotives, and speak of England as if they were afraid to turn around lest they fall into the sea. Among the early arrivals were a few more talkative than wise, who said that, England having failed, it was “up to America to do the trick.” They were only a few, but they did harm. Alas, all of us will be wiser before the war is over. If only we can keep our senses, especially our sense of humour. But there is the rub, since neither understands the jokes of the other, regarding them as insults. Americans and Scotchmen understand each other quickly and completely, no doubt because their humour is more alike. We shall see what we shall see.

This friction and criticism actually extend to preaching. The other day I heard an American preach in the morn-

ing, a Scotchman in the afternoon, and an Englishman in the evening. It was most interesting, and the differences of accent and emphasis were very striking. The American was topical and oratorical, the Scotchman expository and analytical, the Englishman polished and persuasive. After the evening service a dear old Scotchman confided to me that no Englishman had ever preached a real sermon in his life, and that the sermon to which we had just listened would be resented by a village congregation in Scotland. On my objecting that there are great preachers in England, he insisted that "an Englishman either reads an essay, or he talks nonsense; and neither of these is preaching." As a rule, a good English sermon is, if not an essay, at least of the essay type; but the Scotchman exaggerated. When I made bold to ask him what he thought of American preaching, with a twinkle in his eye he quoted the words of Herbert:

"Do not grudge  
To pick treasures out of an earthen pot.  
The worst speaks something good: if all want sense,  
God takes a text, and preacheth patience."

Not wishing to tempt providence, I did not press the matter; but we did agree, diplomatically, that neither type of preaching is what it ought to be. The people are not astonished at the teaching, as of old, nor do the rulers tremble with rage.

*July 24th.*—Had a delightful chat over a chop with Sir Gilbert Parker, and a good "row" about Henry James. When I called James's renunciation of his American for British citizenship an apostasy, my host was "wicked" enough to describe it as an apotheosis. It was in vain that I argued that James was not a true cosmopolitan, else he would have been at home anywhere, even in his own country. The talk then turned to the bad manners

of the two countries, ours being chiefly diplomatic, theirs literary. Indeed, if one takes the trouble to read what Englishmen have written about America,—from the days long gone when they used to venture across the Atlantic to enlighten us with lectures in words of one syllable, to the days of Dickens, and how Britishers have gone sniffing their way through America, finding everything wrong because un-English,—it is a wonder there has not been war every five years. This attitude of supercilious and thinly veiled contempt has continued until it has hardened into a habit. Nor could we recall any books written in America in ridicule of England. Meanwhile, our diplomatic atrocities have been outrageous. Such antics and attitudes, we agreed, would make friendship impossible between individuals, and they demand an improvement in manners, as well as in morals, on both sides. In the midst of the question whether Watts-Dunton saved Swinburne or extinguished him, there was an air-raid warning—and so we reached no conclusion.

*July 25th:*—To-day is the centenary of the death of Dr. John Fawcett, of Hebden Bridge, who wrote “Blest be the tie that binds”; and even amid the horror of war it is celebrated. From his little Baptist chapel at Wainsgate came John Foster, the essayist, and others eminent in educational and missionary labours. In 1772 he went to preach for Dr. Gill in London, and not long after was invited to be his successor. There was deep sorrow at Wainsgate when he accepted. The day of his departure arrived. All his goods were in the cart to leave for London, and his church folk stood looking on in silence. He was heavy of heart, and when his wife went to take a last look at the old house, she said she did not see how she could go. “Neither do I,” he replied; and they put the furniture back in the house, his friends gladly lending a hand. To commemorate the event Dr. Fawcett wrote

the hymn by which alone he lives, though he did much else of use and value in his long and beautiful ministry.

*July 26th:*—Went into St. Paul's this afternoon intending to go again into the crypt, but forgot all about it. At the gate a dear friend, who is a Canon, was selling tickets, and I accused him of being a money-changer in the Temple, warning him as to what the Galilean might do. There followed a discussion of the attitude of Jesus toward the priests of the temple in His day, suggested by the recent essay by Montefiore. The great Jewish scholar—who is a saint, if ever there was one—holds that Jesus was unjust to the Pharisees, as well as untrue to His own teaching in dealing with them. He seemed willing to forgive everybody except his priestly critics, whom he denounced without measure and without discrimination, lifting his voice almost to a shriek. My friend put it in this way:

"Supposing," he said, "a poor layman of obscure birth and of no technical training, who had won a certain popularity among the working-classes, but was looked upon by the clergy and the community in general as a demagogue, were to appear without invitation and demand to speak in this glorious building,"—and he lifted his hand toward the vast dome with the light of love in his eyes.

"Of course," I said, wishing to give him a friendly dig in the ribs, "Jesus, being only a layman, and so hopelessly irregular ecclesiastically, would never be allowed to speak in St. Paul's Cathedral." He ignored my nudge, and went on:

"Supposing that the logical implication of his teaching was that the Service held here was quite unnecessary, and indeed not of a kind that our Heavenly Father, being what He is, would desire. Supposing he were to assert openly and with much vehemence that some of the established customs connected with the Cathedral were im-

moral—would it be possible that his words should be calmly and quietly weighed by us who love and venerate this place, and are proud of its traditions, and have, as so many of us have, wonderful and moving associations with it from past services which we have attended here?"

Knowing that he was profoundly in earnest, I made no answer; and I was glad afterward that I did not, because, as he finished the matter, I was not at all sure that I was equal to such a test myself. He continued:

"That is a question which I confess I ask myself again and again, and I dare not say that I am sure that I should have the sincerity—and the humility, the patience, and the courage which real sincerity involves—to face the questions which such an incident would raise; or to accept the implications of such teaching, even were I to feel in my heart that it was true."

*July 27th.*—Received the following letter from a City Temple boy in the trenches:—

SOMEWHERE IN HELL, *July 16.*

DEAR PREACHER,—

The luck is all on your side; you still believe in things. Good for you. It is topping, if one can do it. But war is such a devil's nursery. I got knocked over, but I am up and at it again. I'm tough. They started toughening me the first day. My bayonet instructor was an ex-pug, just the man to develop one's innate chivalry. They hung out the bunting and gave me a big send-off, when we came out here to scatter the Hun's guts. Forgive me writing so. I know you will forgive me, but who will forgive God? Not I—not I! This war makes me hate God. I don't know whether He is the God of battles and enjoys the show, as He is said to have done long ago. . . . If so, there are smoking holocausts enough to please Him in No Man's Land. But, anyway, He let it

happen! Omnipotent! and—He let it happen! Omniscient! Knew it in advance, and let it happen! I hate Him. You are kinder to me than God has been. Good-bye.

The religious reactions of men under the pressure and horror of war are often terrifying. The general rule—to which, of course, there are many exceptions both ways—is that those who go in pious, with a kind of traditional piety, come out hard and indifferent, and sometimes militantly sceptical; while those who were careless emerge deeply serious—religious, but hardly Christian, with a primitive pantheism mixed with fatalism. Many, to be sure, are confirmed in a mood such as haunts the stories of Conrad, in which the good and bad alike sink into a “vast indifference” or the mood of Hardy, in whom pessimism is mitigated by pity. Others fall back upon the “hard, unyielding despair” of Russell, and their heroism fills me with awe. Huxley, I know, thought the great Force that rules the universe a force to be fought, and he was ready to fight it. It may be magnificent, but it is not war. The odds are so uneven, the fight so futile. And still others have learned, at last, the meaning of the Cross.

(In the interval between these two entries, I went along the war-front, as a guest of the British Government; and after spending some time speaking to the troops, returned to America. I discovered an amazing America, the like of which no one had ever seen, or even imagined, before. Everywhere one heard the sound of marching, marching, marching; and I, who had just seen what they were marching into, watched it all with an infinite ache in my heart. Hardly less terrifying was the blend of alarm, anger, hate, knight-errantry, hysteria, idealism, cynicism, moralistic fervour and plain bafflement, which made up the war-mood of America. One felt the altruism and

inhumanity, the sincerity and sheer brutishness lurking under all our law and order, long sleeked over by prosperity and ease, until we were scarcely aware of it. From New York to Iowa, from Texas to Boston I went to and fro, telling our people what the war was like; after which I returned to England.)

*October 24th.*—Joined a group of Free Church ministers at a private breakfast given by the Prime Minister at No. 10 Downing Street. It was the most extraordinary function I have ever attended, as much for its guests as for its host. Mr. Lloyd George spoke to us for more than an hour, and we saw him at close quarters in the intimacy of a self-revelation most disarming. What a way he has of saying, by the lifting of an eyebrow, by the shrug of the shoulders, by a gesture in a pause, volumes more than his words tell. He feels that his Free Church brethren are estranged, and he wished to explain matters and set himself right. His address was very adroit, but one felt a suggestion of cunning even in his candour, despite a winning smile. He talked like a man in a cage, telling how he was unable to do many things he would like to do. As he spoke, one realised the enormous difficulties of a man in his place,—the pull and tug of diverse interests,—his incredible burdens, and the vast issues with which he must deal. No wonder time has powdered his hair almost white, and cut deep lines in his face. Behind him hung a full-length painting of Pitt, and I thought of the two together, each leading his country in an hour of supreme crisis. I thought him worthy of such company,—though hardly in the Gladstone tradition,—a man of ideas rather than of principles, with more of the mysterious force of genius than either Pitt or Peel, but lacking something of the eternal fascination of Disraeli. Such men are usually regarded as half-

charlatan and half-prophet, and the Prime Minister does not escape that estimate.

At the close of the address there was a disposition to heckle the Prime Minister, during which he learned that Nonconformity had been estranged to some extent—and he also learned why. One of the urgent questions before the country is an actual choice between Bread and Beer, and the Government has been unable, apparently, to decide. The food-hogging brewery interests seem to be sovereign, and the Prime Minister is tied—too willingly, perhaps. When asked why, unlike President Wilson, he avoids the use of the word God in his addresses, I thought his reply neat. It is done deliberately, he said, lest he seem to come into competition with the blasphemous mouthings of the German Emperor. His final plea was that, as Britain must bear the brunt of the war until America is ready,—as Russia bore it until Britain was ready,—she must muster all her courage, her patience, and her moral fortitude.

As I left the house, a group of lynx-eyed, sleuth-like press-men—good fellows, all—waylaid and assailed me for some hint of the meaning of such a gathering; but I was dumb. They were disappointed, saying that “after a minister has had breakfast with the Prime Minister he ought to be a well-primed minister”; but as I declined to be pumped, they let me go. When the supply of truth is not equal to the demand, the temptation is to manufacture, and speculations in the afternoon papers as to the significance of the breakfast were amazing. It was called “A Parson’s Peace,” in which the Prime Minister had called a prayer-meeting to patch up a peace with the enemy—which is about as near as some journals ever arrive at the truth.

*November 6th:*—Under cover of a dense fog—a dirty apron which Mother Nature flung over us to hide us

from the air-raiders—I went down last night into Essex, to preach in a village chapel for a brother who is discouraged in his work. I found the chapel hidden away on a back street, telling of a time when these little altars of faith and liberty dared not show themselves on the main street of a town. It was named Bethesda, bringing to mind the words of Disraeli, in "*Sybil*," where he speaks of "little plain buildings of pale brick, with names painted on them of Zion, Bethel, Bethesda; names of a distant land, and the language of a persecuted and ancient race; yet such is the mysterious power of their divine quality, breathing consolation in the nineteenth century to the harassed forms and harrowed souls of a Saxon peasantry." Nor is that all. They have been the permanent fountains of a religious life on this island; and, in any grand reunion of the Church hereafter to be realised, their faith, their patience, their heroic tenacity to principle must be conserved, else something precious will perish. Tribute is paid to the folk of the *Mayflower* for their daring of adventure in facing an unknown continent for the right to worship; but no less heroic were the men who remained in the homeland, fighting, suffering, and waiting for the freedom of faith and the liberty of prayer.

*November 10th:*—So, at last, it is decided that we are to be rationed as to bread, sugar, and fats of all kinds, and everybody must have a coupon. It is a democratic arrangement, since all will share equally as long as the supply lasts. Unfortunately, the Truth has been rationed for a long time, and no coupons are to be had. It is a war fought in the dark by a people fed on lies. One recalls the line in the "*Iliad*," which might have been written this morning: "We mortals hear only the news, and know nothing at all." No one wishes to publish information which would be of aid to the enemy; but that obvious precaution is made the convenient cover of every kind of

stupidity and inefficiency. Propaganda is the most terrible weapon so far developed by the war. It is worse than poison gas. If the wind is in the right direction, gas may kill a few and injure others; but the possibilities of manipulating the public mind, by withholding or discolouring the facts, are appalling. One is so helpless in face of it. No one can think intelligently without knowing the facts; and if the facts are controlled by interested men, the very idea of democracy is destroyed and becomes a farce. This, and the prostitution of parliamentary government in every democratic land, are the two dangers of a political kind most to be dreaded.

*November 17th:*—Dean Inge, of St. Paul's, is one of the greatest minds on this island, and an effective preacher if one forgets the manner and attends to the matter of his discourse. An aristocrat by temper, he is a pessimist in philosophy and a Christian mystic in faith—what a combination! If not actually a pessimist, he is at least a Cassandra, and we need one such prophet, if no more, in every generation. No wonder he won the title of “the gloomy Dean.” Without wasting a word, in a style as incisive as his thought,—clear, keen-cutting,—he sets forth the truth as he sees it, careless as to whether it is received or not. There is no unction in his preaching; no pathos. It is cold intellect, with never a touch of tenderness. Nor is he the first gloomy Dean of St. Paul's. There was Donne, a mighty preacher in his day, though known now chiefly as a poet, whom Walton described as “enticing others by a sacred art and courtship to amend their lives.” Yet surely the theology of Donne was terrifying rather than enticing. There is very little of the poet in Dean Inge, and none of the dismal theology of Donne, who was haunted equally by the terrors of hell and by the horrors of physical decay in death.

*December 1st:*—The British Army is before Jerusalem!

What an item of news, half dream-like in its remoteness, half romantic in its reality. What echoes it awakens in our hearts, evoking we know not how many memories of the old, high, holy legend of the world! Often captured, often destroyed, that grey old city still stands, like the faith of which it is the emblem, because it is founded upon a rock. If Rome is the Eternal City, Jerusalem is the City of the Eternal. Four cities may be said to stand out in the story of man as centres of the highest life of the race, and about them are gathered the vastest accumulations of history and of legend: Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, and London! But no city can have the same place in the spiritual geography of mankind that Jerusalem has. For four thousand years it has been an altar and a confessional of the race. Religiously, it is the capital of the world, if only because Jesus walked in it and wept over it. O Jerusalem, if we forget thee, Athens fails, Rome fails, London fails! Without the faith and vision that burned in the city on Mount Moriah, our race will lose its way in the dim country of this world. Berlin does not mean much. Jerusalem means everything. If only we could agree that, hereafter, when we have disagreements, we will make our way to the ancient City of God, and arbitrate them!

*December 18th.*—Pathetic is the bewilderment of religious leaders, but there are tokens of promise. For one thing, we are rediscovering the uses of the group—the law of two or three and Jesus—and the little companies, gathered here and there to think things through on their knees, are learning much about the power of fellowship in corporate prayer. We are down upon the foundations now, having witnessed the breakdown of private faith no less than the public impotence of religion. If there is to be a religious awakening, it will be felt first by those who are ready for it. Some of us have lost our faith in

many of the devices recommended for arming the churches with the power of God. The Spirit bloweth where it listeth. It catches men unawares when they are attending to something else. Almost the only sign of promise on the religious horizon is the Brotherhood Movement, an outgrowth of the old Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. Springing up spontaneously, it is an answer to a deeply felt need for a closer fellowship in the service of a more practical Christianity. Outside the church, it is in nowise opposed to the church. It is religious, but not ecclesiastical; spiritual, but not sectarian; positive, but not dogmatic—its sole object being to assert the principle, to spread the spirit, and to promote the practice of brotherhood. It makes no dogma—theological or economic—a test of fellowship, but invites men of every rank and walk of life to join hands in goodwill for the common good, that it might be fulfilled as it was written by the poet:

No man could tell me what my soul might be;  
I sought for God, and He eluded me;  
I sought my brother out, and found all three.<sup>1</sup>

*December 19th:*—H. B. Irving spoke for me at the Thursday noon service to-day on Religion and the Drama, and we lunched together afterward. The big pulpit was a fit frame for his tall figure and classical, clear-cut features, and his noble voice filled the Temple. He recalled the friendship between Dr. Parker and Sir Henry Irving, and the saying that it was hard to know which was the

<sup>1</sup> In 1916 the first welcome given me, outside the City Temple, was by the National assembly of the Brotherhood Movement, in the Bishopsgate Institute, and I can feel the warmth and glow of it to this day. Later, as a member of the National Council of the Brotherhood, I came to know, admire and love its leaders: William Ward, author of "Every Church a Brotherhood," a dynamo of energy and enthusiasm; Tom Sykes, a Yorkshire man with a bucket full of brains and a heart as big as all-out-of-doors; Harry Jeffs, wise journalist and almost perfect Christian; and, greatest of all, Dr. Clifford, the Grand Old Man of the Free Churches, whose faith is a pillar of fire by night, and whose character is a consecration. Together, or in teams, we went to and fro over England, at a time when the brotherhood of the world was broken, speaking in behalf of fraternal righteousness and seeking to organise God's light. I shall never find better comrades anywhere.

better actor of the two. It was a good point when he said that in view of the amount of pose, pretence, and humbug in the world, he often thought the only really honest person was the actor, because he said plainly, "I am not what I pretend to be." I was charmed by his personality, and especially in our long chat after the address. He is interested in his hobbies, one of which is a study of criminology, in which he is quite an authority and is soon to publish another book. He refuses to admit that criminals are unlike the rest of us. They are neither freaks nor fools, but just folk like ourselves gone awry. He has also written the standard life of Judge Jeffreys, of infamous memory. As he spoke of his father one realised what a profound reverence is. He said that Sir Henry always kept a picture of Christ in his bedroom, where he could see it the moment he awoke. "I remember," he said, "hearing my father say to a young man, discriminating between the moral responsibilities of youth and of manhood, 'God would forgive you; He would not forgive me.' "



#### **IV: *War and Preaching***



## IV

### *War and Preaching*

*January 1st, 1918:*—Christmas is over, thank God! The contrast between its gentle ideals and the ghastly realities round about us almost tears one in two. Here we sing, “Peace on earth among men of good-will”; out there, the killing of boys goes on. What irony! Still, one remembers that it was a hard old Roman world in which the Angels of the first Christmas sang their anthem of prophecy. How far off it must have seemed that day; how far off it seems to-day. The world is yet in twilight, and from behind dim horizons comes ceaselessly the thunder of great guns. A frost-like surface of garish gaiety sparkles in our cities, as anxiety turns to laughter, or to apathy, for relief.

After all these ages, must we say that the song of Christmas is as vain as all the vain things proclaimed of Solomon? No; it will come true. It is not a myth. It is not a mockery. Surviving ages of slaughter, it returns to haunt us, proving in this last defeat its immortality. Because that music is far off, we know that it is not our own, but was sent into the world by One who is as far above our discordant noises as the stars are above the mists. Whatever befall, we dare not lose Faith, dare not surrender to Hate, since that would be the saddest of all defeats. And the children sang carols at our doors, as in the days of Dickens, as if to rebuke our misgiving and despair.

*January 7th.*—One serious handicap besets a minister who labours abroad: he cannot deal with public questions with the same freedom that he can at home. Indeed, he can hardly touch them at all—when criticism is required—save as they may be international in their range. Yesterday, on the national Day of Prayer, I made protest in the City Temple against allowing the increase of brewery supplies to stand, on the ground that it is not cricket to destroy foodstuffs at a time when we have no bread fit to eat and cannot get sugar for our children. To-day every brewery paper in the kingdom jumped upon me with all four feet, *John Bull* leading the pack. It does not matter if every journal in the land stands on its hind-legs and howls, as most of them are doing. What hurts me is the silence of the churches! The majority of Free Churchmen are against the traffic, but hardly so in the Established Church. Indeed, that Church is more or less involved in the trade, at least to the extent of allowing its properties to be used by public houses. Many of the higher clergy refused to forego their wine during the war, even at the request of the King.

The situation is unlike anything we know in America. Liquor is used in England much as we use coffee; it is intrenched in custom, disinfected by habit, and protected by respectability. Moreover, the traffic is less open, less easy to get at in England, and those who profit by it are often of the most aristocratic and influential class in the community. There is, besides, a school of English political thought which holds the sublime doctrine that the way to keep the workingman quiet and contented is to keep him pickled in beer. Any suggestion of abolishing the traffic is, therefore, regarded as an invitation to anarchy, and dire predictions are made. Almost anywhere in London one sees a dozen baby-carts at the door of a public house, while the mothers are inside guzzling beer. Never

before have I seen drunken mothers trying to push baby-carts! Surely England has an enemy behind the lines!

*January 12th:*—Had a delicious tilt with Chesterton, who apparently regards the Dogma of Beer as an article of Christian faith. Every time I meet him I think of “The Man Who Was Thursday”—a story in which he has drawn a portrait of himself. He is not only enormously fat, but tall to boot; a mountain of a man. His head, seen from behind, looks larger than any human head has a right to be. He is the soul of goodfellowship, and as the wine in his glass goes down, one may witness an exhibition worth going miles to see. He leads words into the arena, first in single file, then four abreast, then in regiments; and the feats they perform are hair-raising. If he talks in paradoxes, it is for the same reason that more solemn persons talk in platitudes—he cannot help it.

From the Gospel of Beer, the talk turned to Wells and his new theology; and it was good to hear Chesterton laugh about a God unfinished and still in the making. His epigram hit it off to a dot. “The Christ of Wells is tidy; the real Christ is titanic.” We agreed that the portraiture of Jesus by Wells is in bad drawing, being too much like Wells himself; but we remembered other portraits by the same hand,—Kipps, Polly, and the rest,—very ordinary men made extraordinary and individual and alluring by the magic of genius.

One may call Chesterton many names,—an irrationalist, a reactionary idealist, a humourist teaching serious truth in fun,—but his rich humanity and robust common sense are things for which to give thanks. He is a prophet of normal human nature, and his uproarious faith in God is a tonic in days like these. If Dickens was the greatest American ever born in England, some of us feel that Chesterton is the best thing England has given us since Dickens. One loves him for his strength, his sanity, and

his divine joyousness. The Holy Spirit, said Hermas, is a hilarious spirit!

*January 17th:*—Dr. John Hutton, of Glasgow, preached in the City Temple to-day, his theme being “The Temptation,” that is, the one temptation that includes all others—the spirit of cynicism that haunts all high moods. Artfully, subtly it seeks to lower, somehow, the lights of the soul, to slay ideals, to betray and deliver us to base-mindedness. Such preaching! He searches like a surgeon and heals like a physician. Seldom, if ever, have I had anyone walk right into my heart with a lighted candle in his hand, as he did, and look into the dark corners. For years I had known him as a master of the inner life, whether dealing with the Bible “At Close Quarters,” or with those friends and aiders of faith, like Browning; and there are passages in “The Winds of God” that echo like great music. As a guide to those who are walking in the middle years of life, where bafflements of faith are many and moral pitfalls are deep, there is no one like Hutton; no one near him. But, rich as his books are, his preaching is more wonderful than his writing. While his sermon has the finish of a literary essay, it is delivered with the enthusiasm of an evangelist. The whole man goes into it, uniting humour, pathos, unction, with a certain wildness of abandon, as of one possessed, which is the note of truly great preaching. In my humble judgment he is the greatest preacher in Britain.

*January 23rd:*—Just returned from a journey into the Midlands. At Manchester I preached on Sunday in the Cavendish Street Chapel, where Joseph Parker ministered before going to the City Temple, and lectured on “Lincoln and the War” the following evening. No man ever had a more cordial reception in any city. As a preface to my lecture I paid a tribute to the Manchester *Guardian* as one of the great institutions of this island, and expressed grati-

tude for its sympathetic and intelligent understanding of America and her President, in the difficult days of our neutrality. The American Consul, in seconding a vote of thanks, told an interesting fact found in the files of his office. A group of Manchester citizens, knowing the admiration of Lincoln for John Bright,—a Manchester man,—had a bust of the Quaker statesman made, and it was ready to be sent when the news of the assassination came. They cabled Mrs. Lincoln, asking what they should do. She told them to send it to Washington; and it is now in the White House.

As a fact, I did not see Birmingham at all, because a heavy fog hung over it when I arrived and had not lifted when I left. I could hardly see my audience when I rose to speak, and felt half-choked all through the lecture. As it was my first visit to Birmingham, I began by recalling the great men with whom the city was associated in my mind. The first was Joseph Chamberlain. No sooner had I uttered the name than there were hisses and cries, "No, no! John Bright!" I had forgotten that Bright ever sat for a Birmingham district. The next name was that of John Henry, Cardinal Newman. It was received at first with silence, then with a few groans. But when I mentioned the name of Dr. Dale, there was loud applause; for he was not only a mighty preacher, but a great political influence in the city. Then I reminded my audience that, when Chamberlain was accused in the House of Commons of representing Dr. Dale, he retorted, in praise of the great preacher, that he had no mean constituency. The last man named was J. H. Shorthouse, the author of "*John Inglesant*," one of my favourite books. If the name was recognised at all, there was no sign of it.

*January 27th.*—Have been on another short tour, preaching to the men in the camps, including one of the khaki colleges of the Canadian army at Whitley. Twice,

when the men were given a choice between a sermon and a lecture, they voted to have a sermon. And what they want is a straight talk, hot from the heart, about the truths that make us men; no "set sermon with a stunt text," as one of them explained. When I asked what he meant, he said: "Such texts as 'Put on the whole armour of God,' or 'Fight the good fight,' or 'Quit you like men'; they are doing that now." But they are being undone the while by a terrible shattering of faith, and in many a moral trench-fight.

No end of nonsense has been talked about the men in the armies, as if putting on khaki made a man a saint. No, they are men like ourselves,—our boys,—with the passions and temptations of the rest of us. As one of them put it:—

Our Padre, 'e says I'm a sinner,  
And *John Bull* says I'm a saint;  
And they're both of 'em bound to be liars,  
For I'm neither of them, I ain't.  
I'm a man, and a man's a mixture,  
Right down from his very birth;  
For part of 'im comes from 'eaven.  
And part of 'im comes from earth.

And upon this basis—being a man myself, and therefore a mixture—I talked to them, without mincing words, about the fight for faith and the desperate struggles of the moral life. Never can I forget those eager, earnest, upturned faces,—bronzed by war and weather—many of which were soon to be torn by shot and shell. The difference in preaching to men who have seen little of war, and to those who have been in it for two years or more, is very great. I should know the difference if blindfolded. The latter are as hard as nails. Only now and then does the preacher know the thrill of having dug under, or broken through, the wall of adamant in which they shelter that shy and lonely thing they dare not lose.

*February 18th.*—The American camp at Winchester. Preached four times yesterday in a large moving-picture theatre,—packed to the doors,—and to-day I am as limp as a rag. It was a great experience, talking to such vast companies of my own countrymen—tall, upstanding, wholesome fellows from all over the Union, among them the survivors of the *Tuscania*, torpedoed off the coast of Ireland. They are in the best of spirits, having lost everything except their courage, as one of them said; everyone with a cold, and all togged out in every kind of garb—for those who did not lose their clothing had it ruined by the sea-water.

Spent to-day in Winchester, a city of magnificent memories, about which clusters more of history and of legend than about any city on this island, except London. It is the city of Arthur and the Round Table. Here the Saxon Chronicles were written; here King Alfred lies buried. It is the very birthplace of our civilisation. The College and the St. Cross Hospital have about them the air of the Middle Ages. But the Cathedral is the gem of the scene, having the most beautiful nave I have ever seen. Less a cemetery than the Abbey, even an amateur architect can trace the old Norman style, shading into the early English, and then into the later English styles, showing the evolution of the building while enshrining the history of a race. In the south transept I came upon the tomb of Izaak Walton, and I confess I stood beside it with mingled feelings of reverence and gratitude. Behind the tomb is a noble window, not more than fifty years old, into which the fishing scenes of the New Testament are woven with good effect—an appropriate memorial to the gentlest and wisest fisherman who has lived among us since Jesus lodged with the fishermen by the sea.

The afternoon service in the ancient temple touched me deeply, as if those who conducted it were awed by the

presence of Eternity, and were carrying for a brief time the Torch of Faith, changing but eternal; a faith natural to humanity, and affirmed and expressed by the ordered beauty around them. Such a building is a symbol of that in man which refuses to be subdued, either by the brute forces of life or by the anarchy in his own heart; an emblem of that eternal resolve to love rather than hate, to hope rather than despair.

*March 6th.*—Returning from Edinburgh, I broke my journey at the ancient city of York, where the kindest of welcomes awaited me. Looking out of my hotel window, I saw a music-shop founded in 1768—older than the American Republic. Preached at three o'clock at the Monkgate Methodist Chapel; at five held an institute for ministers; and at seven lectured on Lincoln to a huge audience, Mr. Roundtree, Member of Parliament, presiding. The Lord Mayor presented me with a resolution of welcome, in which the most cordial good-will was expressed for the people of America.

Earlier in the day I was taken to various places of historic interest, including, of course, the beautiful old grey Minster. Also to the grave of John Woolman, the Quaker, a brief biography of whom I had once written. I knew he died while on a mission to England, but I had forgotten that he was buried in York. Reverently we stood by the grave of that simple man,—daringly radical, but divinely gentle,—who was the incarnation of the spirit of Christ, and whose life of love and service, of pity and prayer, made him a kind of sad St. Francis of the new world. York is a stronghold of the Society of Friends—the noblest body of organised mysticism on earth. Aye, the war is making men either sceptics or mystics, and wisdom lies, methinks, with the mystics whose faith is symbolised in the beautiful Listening Angel I saw the other day in the Southwell Cathedral.

*March 12th.*—The Prime Minister spoke to the Free Church Council in the City Temple to-day, and it was an astonishing performance, as much for its wizardry of eloquence as for its moral camouflage. For weeks he has been under a barrage of criticism, as he always is when things do not go right; and the audience was manifestly unsympathetic, if not hostile. As no one knew what would happen, it was arranged that he should enter the pulpit during the singing of a hymn.

As soon as he rose to speak,—his stout body balanced on tiny, dwarflike legs,—the hecklers began a machine-gun fire of questions, and it looked as if we were in for a war of wits. The English heckler is a joy. He does not deal in slang phrases, but aims his dart straight at the target. In ten minutes the Prime Minister had his audience standing and throwing up their hats. It was pure magic. I felt the force of it. But after it was over and I had time to think it through, I found that he had said almost nothing. On the question of Bread or Beer he turned a clever rhetorical trick, and nothing else. The *Evening Star* says that the Prime Minister is not a statesman at all, but a *stuntsman*; and one is half inclined to agree with it. Certainly his genius just now seems to consist in his agility in finding a way out of one tight corner into another, following a zigzag course. An enigmatic and elusive personality,—ruled by intuitions rather than by principles,—if he never leaves me with a sense of sincerity, he at least gives me a conservative thrill. Despite his critics the record of his actual achievements is colossal, and I know of no other personality in this kingdom that could take his place. Like Roosevelt, he knows how to dramatise what he does, making himself the hero of the story; and it is so skilfully done that few see that the hero is also the showman.

*March 13th.*—There are many buildings in London much older than the City Temple—some quite as old as

the church assembling there—but few have been more in contact with the great of all lands and all walks of life. One may doubt if in any pulpit anywhere more voices of different accent have been heard, pleading more great human causes, or making the Gospel eloquent in so many keys and tones of emphasis, or with more variations of insight. Parker, Beecher, MacLaren, Spurgeon, Dean Stanley, Clifford, Campbell, Gunsaulus—to name only a few of many—Anglican and Free Church leaders, Hindu seers and Hebrew Rabbis, liberals and evangelicals, catholics and agnostics, all have been welcomed by the catholicity and hospitality of the City Temple. It was a notable day when Gladstone delivered his remarkable address on the Christian Ministry; hardly less so when Balfour spoke in his inimitable manner—easy, witty, benevolently wise—of the place of Nonconformity in English life and history. Lloyd George, when a political heretic, and after he became Prime Minister, has made more than one great pronouncement from that high pulpit, as on that thrilling day when, speaking of the German proposal of peace, his blue eyes flashed as he said: “It is a dagger wrapped in the Sermon on the Mount!” Men of letters like Wells, Shaw, Chesterton, men of science like Sir Oliver Lodge, editors, artists, actors, soldiers, leaders of Labour, philanthropists and philosophers, as well as great women from Frances Willard to Maude Royden, have been heard in the Temple. Truly, if it is a great throne for the Speaking Man to-day, such memories make it a whispering gallery of the past.

*March 25th.*—At the Thursday-noon service on the 21st, we had news that a great battle had begun, but we little dreamed what turn it would take. Instead of the long-expected Allied advance, it was a gigantic enemy drive, which seems to be sweeping everything before it. Wave after wave of the enemy hosts beat upon the Allied

lines, until they first bent and then broke; the British and French armies may be sundered and the Channel ports captured. All internal dissension is hushed in the presence of the common danger, and one sees once more the real quality of the British character, its quiet courage shining most brightly when the sky is lowering.

London is tongue-tied; people look at each other and understand. If there is any panic, it is among the politicians, not among the people. Resolute, all-suffering, unconquerably cheery, men brace themselves to face the worst—it is magnificent! There was no room for the people in the City Temple yesterday; the call to prayer comes not half so imperatively from the pulpit as from the human heart in its intolerable anxiety and sorrow. These are days when men gather up their final reasons for holding on in the battle of life, seeking the ultimate solace of the Eternal.

What days to read the Bible! Itself a book of battles, its simple words find new interpretation in the awful exegesis of events. Many a Psalm for the day might have been written for the day; the leaping up of fires through the crust of the earth makes them luminous. As we enter the depths, those strange songs follow us. Doubt, elation, anger, and even hate are there perfectly expressed. To-day, as of old, the people imagine a vain thing; the earth trembles; the honour of God is threatened. The Apocalypse, too, has a new force, colour, and beauty, as we regard it in the light of burning cities. Its pictures are like the work of some mighty artist on a vast, cloudy canvas, dipping his brush in earthquake and eclipse and the shadows of the bottomless pit. Once more we see the Four Horses riding over the earth. The challenge of the Book of Job is taken up again; Jeremiah is justified in his sorrow; and the Suffering Servant of God is a living figure in this new crucifixion of humanity.

And the Gospels! Never has there been so complete a vindication of the ethics of Jesus. If, the Facts now say, you take the anti-Christ point of view, this is what it means. Repent, or the Kingdom of Hell will swallow you up! Thus the Galilean triumphs, in the terror of denying his words, no less than in the blessing of obeying them: "Thou hast the words of eternal life."

*March 31st.*—Easter Day! Dr. Rendel Harris tells how in the musty pages of the Journal of a learned society, he came upon a revealing fact. It was there recorded that, on a morning in May, 1797, which broke calmly after a stormy night, it was possible to see from the cliffs of Folkestone even the colour of the cottages on the French mainland. In the spiritual world, also, there is the record of such a day of clear tranquillity, when the fierce night of the Passion had passed, and the day of the Resurrection dawned white and serene. On that Day, and until the Ascension,—when the Great Adventurer was welcomed home,—the Unseen World was known to be near, home-like and real.

To-day is the anniversary of that Day of Divine Lucidity, when men—plain, ordinary men like ourselves—saw through the shadows into the life of things. Softly, benignly, the Day of Eternal Life dawns upon a world red with war and billowed with the graves of those who seem doubly dead, because they died so young. Never did this blessed day shine with deeper meaning; never was its great Arch of Promise so thronged with hurrying feet. Blessed Day! When its bells have fallen into silence, and its lilies have faded into dust, pray God there may live in our hearts the promise that, after the winter of war, there shall be a springtime of peace and good-will!

When one thinks of the number of the fallen, and the heartache that follows the evening sun around the world, it is not strange that many seek communication, as well

as communion, with the dead—longing to see even in a filmy vapour the outlines of forms familiar and dear. The pathos of it is heart-breaking! Even when one is sure that such use of what are called psychical faculties is a retrogression,—since genius is the only medium through which, so far, Heaven has made any spiritual revelation to mankind,—it is none the less hard to rebuke it.

Some think Spiritualism may become a new religion, with Sir Oliver Lodge as its prophet and Sir Conan Doyle as its evangelist. No matter; it has done good, and in a way too easily overlooked. Nearly all of us grew up with a definite picture in our minds of a city with streets of gold and gates of pearl; but that picture has faded. Time and criticism have emptied it of actuality. Since then, the walls of the universe have been pushed back into infinity, and the old scenery of faith has grown dim. Admit that its imagery was crude; it did help the imagination, upon which both faith and hope lean more heavily than we are aware. Now that the old picture has vanished, the unseen world is for many only a bare, blank infinity, soundless and colourless. These new seekers after truth have at least helped to humanise it once more, touching it with light and colour and laughter; and that is a real service, both to faith and to the affections. Meanwhile, not a few are making discoveries in another and better way, as witness this letter:—

DEAR MINISTER,—

Early in the war I lost my husband, and I was mad with grief. I had the children to bring up and no one to help me, so I just raged against God for taking my husband from my side and yet calling Himself good. Someone told me that God could be to me all that my husband was and more. And so I got into the way of defying God in my heart. "Now and here," I used to say, "this is what

I want and God can't give it to me." After a while I came, somehow, to feel that God liked the honesty of it; liked this downright telling Him all my needs, though I had no belief that He could help me. One day I had gone into the garden to gather some flowers, and suddenly I knew that my husband was there with me—just himself, only braver and stronger than he had ever been. I do not know how I knew; but I knew. There was no need of a medium, for I had found God myself, and, finding Him, I had found my husband too.

*April 6th:*—To-day the Lord Mayor of London celebrated the first anniversary of the entrance of America into the War with a Luncheon at the Mansion House. It was a notable gathering. Ambassador Walter H. Page never spoke with more felicity or fire; but he looks unwell. A gracious Southern gentleman of the old school, he is a truly great Ambassador, alike for his tact, his sagacity, and his genius of friendship. At the conclusion of his address he presented to the Lord Mayor a beautiful American flag, which the Lord Mayor said would hereafter hang beside the Union Jack in the Egyptian Room in the Mansion House—called the Egyptian Room, as I learned to-day for the first time, not because of its architecture or decorations, but because it was built with money that came of fines imposed upon Nonconformists in the old days, which was to them like the Egyptian bondage. Mr. Balfour, in his reply to the Ambassador, was at his best, and one enjoyed even his stammer, his habit of going back and picking up phrases, as if he did not know what to say next. No one who attended that historic function will ever forget its spirit of comradeship, its intense but quiet thoughtfulness, and its eloquent interpretation by speakers from both sides of the sea. All agreed that no event in this vast tragedy

is of profounder significance than the reapproachment of the old and new worlds, and especially the new fellowship of English-speaking peoples. If they hold together, as they go the world will have to go!

*April 14th.*—Once more it has been shown that a woman can do some things in the pulpit which no man can do with the same effectiveness. When the question came up as to the *Maisons Tolerées*—that is, houses within the bounds of the British army in which women were herded, under medical supervision, for the uses of the soldiery—I had a conference with Miss Royden, telling her that the question was hers. No man could deal with it properly. The Master of the Temple told me that he had tried and failed. My colleague agreed, and the manner in which she dealt with it was magnificent. Delicately, yet plainly, disguising none of the beastliness of it, she stated the case, and I have never seen such flaming wrath of outraged womanhood at the degradation of her sex! To those who defended the system—and I heard it defended in a group of Christian ministers—after describing the tolerated house at Gayeux-sur-Mer, she said: “Girls who are visited on the average by between twenty and twenty-five men every day, do not long retain any of the youth or attraction which will bring men to them. Soon their places have to be taken by other girls, and the State becomes the procurer! To any woman who believes the sacrifice to be necessary, I would say that she herself ought to volunteer. The men who urge regulated prostitution on grounds of national necessity ought to invite their wives and daughters to fill the places left vacant by the women who are worn out! I use words that sear my heart, but as a woman in a Christian pulpit I cannot be silent in the presence of such an infamy.” Soon the Government began to wince under her attacks, and the abomination was abolished.

Unfortunately the Archbishop did not get angry about it until the victory had been won. Then he denounced the horror in the House of Lords!

*April 15th:*—No spring drive is equal to the drive of spring itself, when April comes marching down the world. Kew Garden is like a bit of paradise, and neither war nor woe can mar its glory. How the English love flowers! Even in the slums of London—which are among the most dismal and God-forsaken spots on earth—one sees in the windows tiny pots of flowers, adding a touch of colour to the drab and dingy scene. At the front, in dugouts, one finds old tin cans full of flowers, gathered from no one knows where. Each English home is walled in for privacy,—unlike our American way,—and each has its own garden of flowers, like a little Eden. One of the first things an Englishman shows his guest is the garden, where the family spend much of their time in summer. April sends everybody digging in the garden.

And such bird-song! The day begins with a concert, and there is an anthem or a solo at any hour. They sing as if the heart of the world were a mystic, unfathomable joy; and even a pessimist like Thomas Hardy wondered what secret the ‘Darkling Thrush’ knew that he did not know; and, further, what right he had to sing in such a world as this. After listening to the birds, one cannot despair of man, seeing Nature at the task of endlessly renewing her life. His war, his statecraft, his science, may be follies or sins; but his life is only budding even yet, and the flower is yet to be. So one feels in April, with a lilac beneath the window.

*April 20th:*—Housekeeping in England, for an American woman, is a trying enough experience at any time; but it is doubly so in war-time when food and fuel conditions are so bad. Until the rationing went into effect, it was a problem to get anything to eat, as the shops

would not take new customers. Even now the bread tastes as if it had been made out of sawdust; and butter being almost an unknown quality, the margarine, like the sins of the King, in "Hamlet," smells to heaven. Shopping is an adventure. Literally one has to deal, not only with "the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick-maker," but with the fish-market, the green-grocer, the dry grocer,—everything at a different place,—so it takes time and heroic patience, and even then one often comes home empty-handed. As a last resort, we fall back on eggs and peanuts,—monkey-nuts, the English call them,—to both of which I take off my hat. It is impossible for one person to keep an English house clean—it is so ill-arranged, and cluttered up with bric-à-brac. There are none of the American appliances for saving labour—no brooms; and the housemaid must get down on her knees, with a dustpan and handbrush, to sweep the room. There is enough brass in the house to keep one able-bodied person busy polishing it. Arnold Bennett has more than one passage of concentrated indignation about the time and energy spent in polishing brass in English houses. It is almost a profession. One compensation is the soft-voiced, well-trained English servants, and often even they are either thievish or slutish.

*April 25th:*—Twice I have heard Bernard Shaw lecture recently, and have not yet recovered from the shock and surprise of meeting him. My idea of Shaw was a man alert, aggressive, self-centred, vastly conceited, craving publicity, laying claim to an omniscience that would astonish most deities. That is to say, a literary acrobat, standing on his head to attract attention, or walking the tight-rope in the top of the tent. But that Shaw is a myth, a legend, a pose. The real Shaw is no such man. Instead, he is physically finicky, almost old-maidish, not only shy and embarrassed off the platform, but awkward,

blushing like a schoolgirl when you meet him. He is gentle, modest, generous, full of quick wisdom, but suggesting lavender, and China tea served in dainty old-world cups. The most garrulous man in Europe before the war, he was smitten dumb by the insanity of it, having no word of comfort or command. Unlike Romain Rolland, he could not even frame a bitter condemnation of it. So, after one or two feeble protests, he went back into his drawing-room, pulled the blinds down, and drank China tea out of his dainty cups, leaving the world to stew in its own juice. Who can describe the fineness, the fatuousness, the futility of him! Whether prophet or harlequin, he has shot his bolt and missed the mark. Of course, the artist will live on in his work—most vividly, perhaps, in his sham-shattering wit.

*April 30th:*—Few Americans realise what the Throne and the Royal Family mean in the life of the British people. Our idea of the King is coloured by our republican preconceptions, to say nothing of our prejudices—not knowing that England is in many ways more democratic than America. The other day, in the City Temple, an American minister spoke of the King as “an animated flag,” little dreaming of the thing of which he is a symbol and the profound affection in which he is held. There is something spiritual in this devotion to the King, something mystical, and the Empire would hardly hold together without it. The Royal Family is really an exaltation of the Home, which is ever the centre of British patriotism. Never, in their true hours, do the English people brag of Britain as a world-power, actual or potential. It is always the home and the hearth,—now to be defended,—and nowhere is the home more sacred and tender. Of every Briton we may say, as Bunyan said of Greatheart: “But that which put glory of grace into all that he did was that he did it for pure love of his Country.” This sentiment

finds incarnation in the Royal Family, in whom the Home rises above party and is untouched by the gusts of passion.

“Their gracious Majesties” is a phrase which exactly describes the reigning King and Queen, though neither can be said to possess, in the same measure, that mysterious quality so difficult to define which, in King Edward and Queen Alexandra, appealed so strongly to the popular imagination. Gentle-hearted, if not actually shy, one feels that the formalism and ceremony of the Court appeal less to the King than to the Queen, whose stateliness sometimes leaves an impression of aloofness. Something of the same shyness one detects in the modest, manly, happy-hearted Prince of Wales, whose personality is so captivating alike in its simplicity and its sincerity. At a time when thrones are falling, the British King moves freely among his people, everywhere honoured and beloved—and all who know the worth of this Empire to civilisation rejoice and give thanks.

*May 19th:*—Dr. Jowett began his ministry at Westminster Chapel to-day,—the anniversary of Pentecost,—welcomed by a hideous air-raid. Somehow, while Dr. Jowett always kindles my imagination, he never gives me that sense of reality which is the greatest thing in preaching. One enjoys his musical voice, his exquisite elocution, his mastery of the art of illustration, and his fastidious style; but the substance of his sermons is incredibly thin. Of course, this is due, in large part, to the theory of popular preaching on which he works. His method is to take a single idea—large or small—and turn it over and over, like a gem, revealing all its facets, on the ground that one idea is all that the average audience is equal to. Of this method Dr. Jowett is a consummate master, and it is a joy to see him make use of it, though at times it leads to a tedious repetition of the text. Often, too, he seems to be labour-

ing under the handicap of a brilliant novelist, who must needs make up in scenery what is lacking in plot.

Since his return to London he has been less given to filigree rhetoric, and he has struck almost for the first time a social note, to the extent, at any rate, of touching upon public affairs—although no one would claim that Dr. Jowett has a social message, in the real meaning of that phrase. No, his forte is personal religious experience of a mild evangelical type; and to a convinced Christian audience of that tradition and training he has a ministry of edification and comfort. But for the typical man of modern mind, caught in the currents and alive to the agitations of our day, Dr. Jowett has no message. However, we must not expect everything from any one servant of God, and the painter is needed as well as the prophet.

*June 2nd.*—Spent a lovely day yesterday at Selborne, a town tucked away among the chalk-hills of Hampshire. There, well-nigh two hundred years ago, Gilbert White watched the Hangar grow green in May and orange and scarlet in October, and learned to be wise. One can almost see him in the atmosphere and setting of his life,—an old-bachelor parson, his face marked by the smallpox, as so many were in that day,—walking over the hills, which he called “majestic mountains,” a student and lover of nature. He was a man who knew his own mind, worked his little plot of earth free from the delusions of grandeur, and published his classic book, “The Natural History of Selborne,” in the year of the fall of the Bastille. Because of this coincidence of dates, it has been said that White was more concerned with the course of events in a martin’s nest than with the crash of empires. No doubt; but it may be that the laws of the universe through which empires fall are best known by a man who has such quietness of soul that a brooding mother-bird will not fly away when he visits her. White asked the universe one ques-

tion, and waited to hear the answer: Take away fear, and what follows? The answer is: Peace, even the peace without which a man cannot learn that when "redstarts shake their tails, they move them horizontally." It was a day to refresh the soul.

*June 10th:*—Attended a Ministerial Fraternal to-day, and greatly enjoyed the freedom and frankness of the discussion. A conservative in England would be a radical in America, so far are they in advance of us. Evidently our English brethren have gotten over the theological mumps, measles, and whooping-cough. For one thing, they have accepted the results of the critical study of the Bible, without losing any of the warmth and glow of evangelical faith,—uniting liberal thought with orthodoxy of the heart,—as we in America have not succeeded in doing. All confessed that the atmosphere of their work has changed; that the fingers of their sermons grope blindly amid the hidden keys of the modern mind, seeking the great new words of comfort and light. It was agreed that a timid, halting, patched-up restatement of faith will not do: there must be a radical reinterpretation, if we are to speak to the new time, which thinks in new terms. On social questions, too, the discussion was trenchant, at times even startling. There was real searching of hearts, drawing us together in a final candour, and driving us back to the permanent fountains of power. The spirit of the meeting was most fraternal, and I, for one, felt that fellowship is both creative and revealing.

*June 25th:*—American troops are pouring into England, and the invasion is a revelation to the English people. Nothing could surpass the kindness and hospitality with which they open their hearts and homes to their kinsmen from the great West. They are at once courteous and critical, torn between feelings of joy, sorrow, and a kind of gentle jealousy—at thought of their own fine fellows

who went away and did not come back. They have seen many kinds of Americans, among them the tourist, the globe-trotter, the unspeakable fop, and the newly rich who spread their vulgarity all over Europe; but now they are discovering the real American,—the manly, modest, intelligent lad from the college, the store, the farm,—and they like him. He is good to look at, wholesome, hearty, straightforward, serious but not solemn, and he has the air of one on an errand. On the surface the British Tommy affects to take the war as a huge joke, but our men take it in dead earnest. "Why, your men are mystics; they are crusaders," said an English journalist to me recently; and I confess they do have that bearing—for such they really are. Last night, in a coffee-house on the Strand, I asked a Cockney proprietor if he had seen many American boys and what he thought of them. Something like this is what I heard:—

"Yerce, and I like what I've seen of 'em. No swank about 'em, y' know—officers an' men, just like pals together. Talks to yeh mately-like—know what I mean?—man to man sort o' thing. Nice, likable chaps, I alwis finds 'em. Bit of a change after all these damn foreigners. I get on with 'em top'-ole. And eat? Fair clean me out. Funny the way they looks at London, though. Mad about it, y' know. I bin in London yers an' yers, and it don't worry me. Wants to know where that bloke put 'is cloak down in the mud for some Queen, and 'ow many generals is buried in Westminster Abbey. 'Ow should I know? I live in Camden Town. I got a business t' attend to. Likable boys, though. 'Ere's to 'em!"

*July 4th:*—Went to the American Army and Navy baseball game, taking as my guests a Member of Parliament and a City Temple friend. Never has there been such a ball game since time began. The King pitched the first ball, and did it right well, too. The papers say he has

been practising for days. Then bedlam broke loose; barbaric pandemonium reigned. Megaphones, whistles, every kind of instrument of torture kept accompaniment to tossing arms and dancing hats—while the grandstand gave such an exhibition of “rooting” in slang as I never heard before. Much of the slang was new to me, and to interpret it to my English friends, and at the same time explain the game, was a task for a genius. Amazement sat upon their faces. They had never imagined that a hard business people could explode in such a hysteria of play. An English crowd is orderly and ladylike in comparison. Of course, the players, aware of an audience at once distinguished and astonished, put on extra airs; and as the game went on, the fun became faster and more furious. My friends would stop their ears to save their sanity, at the same time pretending, with unfailing courtesy, to see, hear, and understand everything. The Navy won, and one last, long, lusty yell concluded the choral service of the day.

*July 20th:*—“The Miracle of St. Dunstan’s.” It is no exaggeration, if by miracle you mean the triumph of spirit over matter and untoward disaster. St. Dunstan’s is the college where young men who gave their eyes for their country learn to be blind; and as I walked through it today I thought of Henley’s lines:—

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

Many of the men are horribly disfigured, and it is a mercy that they cannot see their own faces. Yet, for the most part, they are a jolly set, accepting the inevitable with that spirit of sport which is so great a trait of their race. At least, the totally blind are happy. Those who see partially, and do not know how it will turn out, mope a good deal.

At the head of the college is Sir Arthur Pearson, himself a blind man who has learned to find his way in the dark—a blind leader of the blind. It is wonderful to hear him talk to a boy brought into the college dejected and rebellious against his fate. There is no maudlin sentiment. It is much easier to cry than to succour. They sit hand in hand,—comrades in a conquest,—while Sir Arthur tells the lad, out of his own experience, that, though night has come at noon, the day is not ended. His words, taken out of their context and atmosphere, might sound preachy, as he tells how he refused to be beaten, and how darkness has its surprises. All honour to Sir Arthur,—Knight of the Dark Table,—unforgettable for his courage, his chivalry, and his cheerfulness!

(Early in August I went again to America, on another speaking tour, crossing the bar at Liverpool, in the glow of a miraculous sunset, the sacramental beauty of which haunts me still. Time out of mind I had known Uncle Sam, in his suit of nankeen trousers strapped under his instep, his blue swallow-tail coat and brass buttons, and his ancient high hat. It was not easy to recognise him clad in khaki, wearing a gas-mask and a “tin lid,” and going over the top with a Springfield rifle in his hand; and that change in outward garb was a visible sign of much else. Down the streets of New York, at midnight, one saw long lines of men marching, singing “Over There”; and Service Stars were everywhere, changing from silver to gold. It was an awe-inspiring America,—new in its unity, its power, and its vision of duty,—albeit to-day, it seems like a dim dream of some previous state of existence. Returning to England in October, my ship was one of fifteen loaded with troops, following a zigzag course over a lonely sea. It was at the time of the influenza epidemic, and almost every ship kept a funeral flag flying all the

way. Off the north coast of Ireland we witnessed the destruction of an enemy submarine. Once more, on a Thursday noon, I took up my labours at the City Temple, in an address entitled "The New America," in which I tried to describe the novel experience of rediscovering my own country. Events moved rapidly, and I need add only one or two items from the diary, telling of the end of the greatest war in history, the meaning and issue of which are locked in the bosom of God.)

*October 25th.*—Three times since I returned I have spoken to groups in behalf of Anglo-American friendship, but to little avail. My audiences were already utterly convinced, and it was like arguing with Miss Pankhurst in favour of woman suffrage—as useless as rain at sea. Somehow we never get beyond the courtesies and commonplaces of after-dinner eloquence. Yet the matter is of vital importance just now. Already there are rumours of friction between our boys and the Tommies. These are little things, but the sum of them is very great, and in the mood of the hour so many reactions of personal antagonism may be fatal. Not much idealism is left after the long struggle, and one fears a dreadful reaction,—a swift, hideous slip backward,—driving Britain and America further apart than they were before the war. Little groups do something, but what we need is some great gesture, to compel attention and dramatise the scene for the masses on both sides of the sea. Frankly, I am not clear as to the best method—except that we have not found it. Even now, all feel that the end of the war is near, and one detects tokens which foretell a different mood when peace arrives.

*October 29th.*—Ever and again one hears rumours of a revolution in England in which things will be turned upside down. One might be more alarmed, but for the fact

that the revolution has already taken place. The old England has gone, taking with it much that was lovely and fair; a new England is here,—new in spirit, in vision, in outlook,—not only changing in temper, but actually changing hands. As the Napoleonic wars ended the aristocratic epoch and brought the middle class to the fore, so the great war has ended the rule of the middle class and will bring the man down under to the top. Of course, as to outward appearance, the aristocratic and middle classes still rule; but their ideas do not rule. There will be no violent upheaval in England; the genius of the British mind—a practical mysticism, so to name it, though the practicality is often more manifest than the mysticism—will not let it be so. Again and again I have seen them drawn up in battle-array, ready for a fight to a finish—then, the next moment, they begin to parley, to give and take; and, finally, they compromise, each getting something and nobody getting all he asked. Therein they are wise, and their long political experience, their instinct for the middle way, as well as their non-explosive temperament, stand them in good stead in these days. Besides, if English society is a house of three stories, the house has been so shaken by the earthquake of war that all classes have a new sense of kinship and obligation. No doubt there will be flare-ups in Wales, or among the hot-heads on the Clyde; but there is little danger of anything more.

*November 8th.*—Went to Oxford last night to hear Professor Gilbert Murray lecture on the Peloponnesian War of the Greeks as compared with our great war; and his words haunt me. With an uncanny felicity, the great scholar—who is also a great citizen—told the story of the war that destroyed Greek civilisation; and the parallel with the present war was deadly, even down to minute details. About the only differences are the magnitude of the armies and the murderous efficiency of the weapons we now

employ. As I listened, I found myself wondering whether I was in Oxford or in ancient Athens. The lecturer has the creative touch which makes history live in all its vivid human colour. Euripides and Aristophanes seemed like contemporaries.

What depressed me was the monotonous sameness of human nature throughout the ages. Men are doing the same things they did when Homer smote his lyre or Hammurabi framed his laws. For example, in the Athens of antiquity there were pacifists and bitter-enders, profiteers and venal politicians—everything, in fact, with which the great war has made us familiar. After twenty centuries of Christian influence, we do the same old things in the same old fashion, only on a more gigantic scale.

This shadow fell over me to-day as I talked with a young French officer in my study. He used this terrible sentence with an air of sad finality: "Ideals, my reverend friend, are at the mercy of the baser instincts." What faith it takes to sustain an ardent, impatient, forward-looking soul in a slow universe! "Keep facing it," said the old skipper to the young mate in Conrad's "Typhoon"; and ere we know it, the ship has become a symbol of the life of man. He did not know whether the ship would be lost or not—nor do we. But he kept facing the storm, taking time to be just to the coolies on board, much to the amazement of Jukes. He never lost hope; and if he was an older man when he got through the storm, he at least sailed into the harbour.

*November 11th:*—London went wild to-day. As a signal that the Armistice had been signed, the air-raid guns sounded,—bringing back unhappy memories,—but we knew that "the desired, delayed, incredible time" had arrived. The war has ended; and humanity, on its knees, thanks God. Words were not made for such a time. They stammer, and falter, and fail. Whether to shout or

weep, men did not know; so we did both. Something not ourselves has made for righteousness, and we are awed, subdued, overwhelmed. The triumph seems wrought, not by mortal, but by immortal thews, and shouts of joy are muffled by thoughts of the gay and gallant dead.

The rebound from the long repression was quick, the outburst startling. Men danced in the streets. They hugged and kissed and sobbed. Flags flew everywhere, flags of every colour. Women wore dresses made of flags. Shops and factories emptied of their own accord. At an early hour a vast host gathered at the gates of Buckingham Palace, singing the national anthem. The King and Queen appeared on the balcony, and a mighty shout went up—like the sound of many waters.

St. Paul's was jammed by noon; the Abbey was packed. It melted the heart to hear them sing—there was an echo of a sob in every song. All know that the secret of our joy is locked in the cold young hearts that sleep in Flanders, in eyes that see the sun no more. Never was the world so coerced by its dead. They command; we must obey. From prayer the city turned to play again. No wonder; the long strain, the bitter sorrow, the stern endurance had to find vent. At first, peace seemed as unreal as war. It took time to adjust the mind to the amazing reality. Even now it seems half a dream. There is little hate, only pity. The rush of events has been so rapid, so bewildering, that men are dazed. Down on the Embankment I saw two old men, walking arm-in-arm, one blind, the other half-blind, and both in rags. One played an old battered hand-organ, and the other sang in a cracked voice. They swayed to and fro, keeping time to the hymn, "Our God, our hope in ages past." So it was from end to end of London. The grey old city seemed like a cathedral, its streets aisles, its throngs worshippers.

**V: *Peace and Chaos***



## V

### *Peace and Chaos*

(No sooner had the Armistice been signed, than there followed, not simply a rebound, but a collapse, which no one who lived through it will ever forget. Swiftly, tragically, the high mood of sacrifice yielded to a ruthless selfishness, and the solidarity won by the war was lost, together with most of the idealism that had stood the stress and terror of it. The moral demobilisation was terrifying; the disillusionment appalling. Men had lived a generation in five years; and instead of a new world of which they had dreamed, they found themselves in a world embittered, confused, cynical, grey with grief, if not cracked to its foundations—all the old envies working their malign intent. Such a chaos offered free play to every vile and slimy influence, making the earth an auditorium for every hoarse and bitter voice that could make itself heard. It was a time of social irritation, moral reaction, and spiritual fatigue, almost more trying than the war itself, the only joy being that the killing of boys had stopped.

Old jealousies and new envies began to make themselves felt—among them a very emphatic anti-American feeling; a reminiscence, in part, of the impatience at our delay in entering the war, joined with suspicion of our wealth and power. The same was true in America, in its feeling toward England and the other Allies. Mrs. A. Burnett-Smith—"Annie S. Swan"—in her admirable book,

"America at Home," tells how fine and warm the feeling in America was before the Armistice, and how quickly it changed: "There was a reaction, of which was born a coolness, a new, subtle hostility, which one could sense everywhere." Her book, I may add, is one of the few of its kind that never fails of that fineness of feeling which should always exist between kindred peoples. Her observations are interesting, her comments frank but kindly, and the whole book is informed with a charming and sympathetic personality. As Mr. W. L. George has said, if the war did not make us love our enemies, it at least taught us to hate our allies.)

*November 20th, 1918:*—For one who has set great store by the co-operation of English-speaking peoples, the new anti-American propaganda is like a personal bereavement. The feeling in England with regard to America is certainly, as the Scotch would say, "on the north side of friendly," and manifests itself in many petty, nagging ways. To read the London papers now, one would think that America, and not Germany, had been the enemy of England in the war. Every kind of gibe, slur, and sneer is used to poison the public mind against America. My mail at the City Temple has become almost unreadable. It takes the familiar forms—among the upper classes an insufferably patronising and contemptuous attitude toward America and all things American; among the lower classes an ignorant ill-will. The middle classes are not much influenced by it, perhaps because, as Emerson said, America is a "middle-class country"—whereof we ought to be both grateful and proud. This feeling against America is confined, for the most part, to England,—it hardly exists in Scotland or in Wales,—and, like the anti-British feeling in America, it is a fruitful field for the venal press and the stupid demagogue. Naturally, a journal like *John Bull*—

leader of the gutter-press—is in its glory; but even in the better class of papers one reads nasty flings at America and its President. As for the *Morning Post*, no one expects anything other than its usual pose of supercilious condescension and savage satire, and it is at its brilliant worst. Six weeks ago we were regarded as friends; to-day our country is the target of ridicule as clever as it is brutal. No doubt it is mostly nerves—a part of the inevitable reaction—and will pass away; but it is none the less a tragedy.

*November 22nd:*—It is nothing short of a calamity that in this ugly hour of reaction and revenge there is to be a national election. There is no need for an election, no demand for it. But to those who can see beneath the surface, there is a deeper meaning. Three months ago Arthur Henderson said: “If we have a national election in Britain, you will not get a Wilson peace.” I did not realise at the time what he meant; but I can now say to him, “Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.” There is to be a khaki election, such as Chamberlain had following the Boer War, the better to coin into political capital all the anger, suspicion, resentment, and disillusionment burning in the public mind. In other words, it is a deliberate scheme of the Prime Minister—or a group of strong men who use him as a tool—to mobilise the least admirable elements of England,—not the great, noble England, but a reactionary, imperialistic England,—and have them in solid phalanx behind the Peace Conference. And in the mood of the hour the scheme will work, with consequences both for England and for the world which no one can predict. Reaction in England will mean reaction elsewhere, if not everywhere.

*November 24th:*—Nothing was left hazy after the speech of the Premier in Westminster Hall, launching his Coalition campaign. It was a skilful speech, intimating

that even the Throne may be in danger, and playing upon the fears and hates of men. He wants a Parliament, he said, in which there shall be no opposition,—no criticism, no discussion,—and this proposal to prostitute Parliament was greeted with applause. There is protest in the Liberal press; but men in the street and tram give each other the knowing look and the approving nod, praising “the Little Welsh Wizard.” It is called a “Coupon Election,” since each Coalition candidate must have the indorsement of the Prime Minister, and the food-coupon is the most detestable thing in the public mind. Sir George Younger—master brewer of the kingdom—is the organiser and wire-puller of the campaign.

As for the Prime Minister, he is both the author and the hero of the most remarkable blood-and-thunder moving-picture show in political history; what the papers call “The Victory Film, or How I Won the War.” He goes to and fro, shrieking two slogans. First, hang the Kaiser! Second, twenty-five thousand million pounds indemnity! What sublime statesmanship! Behind this smoke screen of rhetoric and revenge the most sinister forces are busy; and the trick will work. Liberals and Labourites are unable to unite. Even if they should unite, they could not stem the tide. Two things are as plain as if they were written upon the wall. First, the President is defeated before he sails; and second, if the war is won, the peace is lost.

*November 26th.*—Once again opinion is sharply divided as to the motives and purposes of the Prime Minister. By some he is held to be a messiah, by others a light-minded mountebank. Still others think he is only a political chameleon, taking colour from the last strong man, or group of men, he meets. Obviously he is none of these things, but merely an opportunist, without any principle or policy,—except to retain power,—feeling his way to get

all he can. The story is that, walking in the House of Parliament with a friend the other day, he suddenly stopped, tapped his breast, and said: "I sometimes wonder if this is Lloyd George." His wonder is shared by millions of people. Certainly it is not the Lloyd George we used to know, who had the light of morning in his eyes. Limehouse is far in the distance. The fiery champion of justice for the Boers is a pathetic memory. The man who defied the vested interests of England in behalf of the poor, the aged, the disinherited, is a ghost. There is another Lloyd George, so new and strange that he does not know himself. With his personality, his power of speech, his political acumen, which almost amounts to inspiration, he could lead England anywhere; but he has turned back. It is one of the greatest failures of leadership in our time.

*November 28th.*—Often one is tempted to think that the Labour Movement is the most Christian thing on this island. In its leadership, at least, it is spiritually minded; its leaders, as I have come to know them, being sincere, earnest, honest men who have worked their way up from the bottom, or else have been drawn into the movement by the opportunity for service. Not all of them are so minded, but the outstanding leaders and spokesmen of the movement—who, unfortunately, are in advance of the rank and file—are men of a type unknown, or nearly so, in American labour. Henderson, Thomas, Snowden, Webb, MacDonald, Clynes, and the rest, make a goodly group. Henderson is a lay preacher; so is Thomas. As for Robert Smillie, I do not know what his religious affiliations, if any, may be, except that he is a disciple of Keir Hardie, and that his relentless idealism is matched by the nobility of his character. Tall, gaunt, stooped, his face reveals the harsh attrition of earlier years; but his smile is kindly, and his eyes have in them the light of an unconquerable will. He helps one to know what Lincoln must have been like.

In this campaign the leaders of Labour are almost the only keepers of the nobler idealism of England, and their programme is essentially Christian. Alas, they have a heavy weight of inertia to carry, and one wonders if they can fire the apathetic mass, fatalistically submissive to its lot, and suspicious of anyone who tries to alter it.

*November 29th:*—Anyway, I am having the time of my life, going to every sort of political meeting and listening to every sort of speech. It is a big show and a continuous performance. The best address I have heard, so far, was delivered by a Methodist preacher at a Labour meeting in Kingsway Hall. His sentences cracked like rifle-shots, and they hit the mark. The campaign makes me first sick, and then homesick; it is so like our way of doing it. That is, all except the hecklers. They are so quick and keen of retort. Also, the English can beat us at mud-slinging. It is humiliating to admit it, but it is so. We are amateurs in abusing the government; but we are young yet, and longer practice will no doubt give us greater skill. How like our elections is the hubbub and hysteria of it all. Mr. Asquith told me how he made a speech on world-affairs, and one of his audience said: “What we want to know is, are we going to get a pier for our boats!” Always the local grievance clouds the larger issue. How familiar it is, as if a man went out, and encountered in the street what he thought for the moment was himself. Men, otherwise sane, seem to lose their senses in a political campaign. Statesmen talk drivel, promising what no mortal can perform, challenging the scorn of man and the judgment of heaven. O Democracy!

(As soon as it was known that the President was to attend the Peace Conference in person, the Tory papers in London began subtly and skilfully to paint a caricature of him in the public mind. He was described as a kind of

Hamlet, living aloof in the cloisters of the White House; a visionary companioned by abstractions; a thinking-machine so cold that one could skate all round him, having "as good a heart as can be made out of brains,"—"not a man at all, but a bundle of formulæ,"—and, finally, by the *Morning Post*, as a "political Moody and Sankey" coming to convert Europe to his gospel of "internationalism," which it described as a "disease." Such was the reactionary attitude toward the man who made the only constructive suggestion seeking to prevent the "collective suicide" of war. But only a small part of the British press was guilty of such a violation of good form and good feeling. *The Times*—by virtue, no doubt, of its position, not only as a journal, but as an institution—secured from the President a memorable interview, in which he was shown to be actually and attractively human; and, further, that he had no intention of demanding the sinking of the British Fleet.

The President arrived in London the day after Christmas, and the greeting accorded him by the English people was astonishingly hearty and enthusiastic. Their curiosity to see the man whose words had rung in their ears, expressing what so many hoped but so few were able to say, joined with their desire to pay homage to the first President of our Republic who had set foot on English soil. His visit was taken to be a gesture of good-will, and I have never seen anything like the way in which he captured the English people. He swept them off their feet. For a brief time his marvellous personality, his "magic of the necessary word," his tact, his charm, seemed to change the climate of the island. No man in our history could have represented us more brilliantly. In Buckingham Palace as the guest of the King, in the old Guildhall as a guest of the City, at the luncheon in the Mansion House, his words were not a mere formal, diplomatic response, but real in

their unaffected simplicity, and as appropriate as they were eloquent. On the Sabbath, instead of going with the King to worship at St. Paul's, he went to the little Nonconformist Chapel at Carlisle, where his mother had been a girl, and his grandfather the minister. His brief talk in the old pulpit was a gem, and it touched the people deeply. At the Mansion House luncheon we heard the news of the election returns—the result having been delayed in order to get the report of the soldier vote.)

*December 28th.*—So the President has come and gone, and the Prime Minister has learned what was in his Christmas stocking. It is a blank check, and he may now fill it in with such stakes as he can win at the Peace Table. He divined aright the bitter mood and temper of the hour. It is a Tory victory by a trick, the Liberal Party having been asphyxiated, if not destroyed; and it remains to be seen whether it can be resuscitated. Mr. Asquith was defeated; Mr. Bottomley was elected! In America that would be equal to the defeat of Elihu Root and the election of Hearst, and would be deemed a disaster. So the Prime Minister gets what he wanted—a Parliament tied, hamstrung, without moral mandate, three quarters of its members having accepted the coupon; and of the remainder, the largest party consists of seventy Sinn Feiners who are either in prison or pledged not to sit in the House. It is a Parliament in which there will be no effective opposition, the Labour Party being insignificant and badly led. The Prime Minister gets what he wants, but at the sacrifice of the noblest tradition in British history. Labour is sullen, bitter, angry. I predict a rapid development of the dogma of Direct Action; and, if it is so, the Prime Minister will have no one to blame but himself. Such is the effect of a trick election, the tragedy of which grows as its meaning is revealed.

(The reference to Mr. Bottomley implies no ill-will to him personally, though I hate the things for which he stands. When it was announced that I had accepted the invitation to the City Temple, I received a long cablegram from Mr. Bottomley, suggesting that I write for his paper, *John Bull*, and telling of his admiration for Dr. Parker. Unfortunately, as I did not choose to be introduced to England through such a medium, I could not accept his invitation. Often—especially after my protest against the increase of brewery supplies—he wrote cruel things about me. It did not matter; I should have been much more unhappy if he had written in my praise. He is the captain of the most dangerous and disintegrating elements in Britain,—the mob as distinct from democracy,—the crowded public-house, the cheap music-hall, and the nether side of the sporting world. With facile and copious emotions, he champions the cause of the poor, with ready tears for ruined girls—preferably if the story of their ruin will smack a little smuttily in his paper. Since the Armistice, his office has been the poison-factory and centre of anti-American propaganda, and in playing upon the fears and hates and prejudices of people, he is a master. Alas, we are only too familiar with his type on this side of the sea.)

*January 4th, 1919:*—Joined a group to-day noon, to discuss the problem of Christian union, by which they seemed to mean Church union—a very different thing. But it was only talk. Men are not ready for it, and the time is not ripe. Nor can it be hastened, as my friend the Bishop of Manchester thought when he proposed some spectacular dramatisation of the Will to Fellowship during the war. Still less will it come by erasing all historical loyalties in one indistinguishable blue of ambiguity. If it is artificial, it will be superficial. It must come spiritually

and spontaneously, else it will be a union, not of the Church, but of the churchyard. Dicker and deal suggest a horse-trade. No, our fathers parted in passion; in passion we must come together. It must be a union, not of compromise, but of comprehension. If all the churches were made one to-day, what difference would it make? Little, if any. Something deeper and more drastic is needed. As the Elizabethan Renaissance was moralised by the advent of Puritanism, and the reaction from the French Revolution was followed by the Evangelical Revival, so, by a like rhythm, the new age into which we are entering will be quickened, in some unpredictable way, by a renewal of religion. Then, perhaps, on a tide of new life, we may be drawn together in some form of union. In this country no union is possible with a State Church, unless the Free Churches are willing to turn the faces of their leaders to the wall. So far from being a national church, the Anglican communion is only a tiny sect on one end of the island. Its claim to a monopoly of apostolicity is not amenable to the law of gravitation—since it rests upon nothing, no one can knock away its foundations. Just now we are importuned to accept the “historic episcopacy” for the sake of regularity, as if regularity were more important than reality. Even the Free Churches have failed to federate, and one is not sorry to have it so, remembering the lines of an old Wiltshire love-song which I heard the other day:—

If all the world were of one religion  
Many a living thing should die.

*January 12th.*—Alas! affairs on the lovely but unhappy island of Ireland seem to go from bad to worse, adding another irritation to a shell-shocked world. From a distance the Irish issue is simple enough, but near at hand it is a sad tangle, complicated by immemorial racial and reli-

gious rancours, and, what is sadder still, by a seemingly hopeless incompatibility of temperament between the peoples of these two islands. They do not, and apparently cannot, understand each other. It looks like the old problem of what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object. Besides, the friction is not only between Ireland and England, but between two Irelands—different in race, religion, and economic organisation. If Ireland could be divided, as Lincoln divided Virginia, the riddle would be solved. But no Irishman will agree.

The English people, as I talk with them about Ireland, are as much bewildered by it as anybody else. They do feel hurt at the attitude of South Ireland during the war, and I confess I cannot chide them for it. Ireland was exempted from conscription, from rationing, from nearly all the hardships of a war which, had it been lost, would have meant the enslavement of Ireland, as well as the rest of the world. A distinguished journalist told me that his own Yorkshire relatives were forced into Irish regiments by politicians, to make it appear that Ireland was fighting. The Irish seaboard, except in Ulster, was hostile seaboard. It required seventy-five thousand men to keep order in Ireland, and that, too, at a time when every man was needed at the front. Ulster, in the meantime, did magnificently in the war, and it would be a base treachery to coerce it to leave the United Kingdom. Ulster may be dour and relentless, but it has rights which must be respected. Yet, if England does not find a way out of the Irish muddle, she may imperil the peace of the world. So the matter stands, like the Mark Twain story in which he got the hero and heroine into so intricate a tangle that he gave it up, and ended by offering a prize to anyone who could get them out of it.

*January 14th:*—To-day a distinguished London minister told me a story about the President, for which he

vouches. He had it from the late Sylvester Horne,—Member of Parliament and minister of Whitefield's Chapel,—who had known the President for years before he was elevated to his high office. Horne happened to be in America—where he was always a welcome guest—before the war, shortly after the President was inaugurated, and he called at the White House to pay his respects. In the course of the talk, he expressed satisfaction that the relations between England and America would be in safe hands while the President was in office. The President said nothing, and Horne wondered at it. Finally he forced the issue, putting it as a question point-blank. The President said, addressing him in the familiar language of religious fellowship: "Brother Horne, one of the greatest calamities that has befallen mankind will come during my term of office. It will come from Germany. Go home and settle the Irish question, and there will be no doubt as to where America will stand."

How strange, how tragic, if, having kept America out of the war for more than two years,—since nearly all Irishmen are in the party of the President,—Ireland should also keep America out of the peace, and defeat, or at least indefinitely postpone, the organisation of an effective league of nations! Yet such may be the price we must pay for the wrongs of olden time, by virtue of the law whereby the sins of the fathers are visited upon generation after generation. Naturally the English people do not understand our urgent interest in the problem of Ireland, not knowing how it meddles in our affairs, poisoning the springs of good-will, and thwarting the co-operation between English-speaking peoples upon which so much depends.

*January 16th.*—At the London Poetry Society—which has made me one of its vice-presidents—one meets many interesting artists, as well as those who are trying to sing

the Everlasting Song in these discordant days—Masefield, Noyes, Newbolt, Yeats, Mackereth, to name but a few, with an occasional glimpse of Hardy. Nor do I forget May Doney, a little daughter of St. Francis, walking “The Way of Wonder.” A reading of poetry by Sir Forbes Robertson is always an event, as much for his golden voice as for his interpretative insight. The plea of Mackereth, some time ago, for poetry as a spiritual teacher and social healer, was memorable, appealing to the Spirit of Song to bring back to hearts grown bitter and dark the warmth and guidance of vision. The first time I heard of Mackereth was from a British officer as we stood ankle-deep in soppy mud in a Flanders trench. If only we could have a League of Poets there would be hope of a gentler, better world, and they surely could not make a worse mess of it than the “practical” men have made. If the image in the minds of the poets of to-day is a prophecy of to-morrow, we may yet hope for a world where pity and joy walk the old, worn human road, and “Beauty passes with the sun on her wings.”

*January 19th.*—The Peace Conference opened with imposing ceremony at Versailles yesterday, and now we shall see what we shall see. An idealist, a materialist, and an opportunist are to put the world to rights. Just why a pessimist was not included is hard to know, but no doubt there will be pessimists a-plenty before the job is done. Clemenceau is a man of action, Lloyd George a man of transaction, and what kind of a man the President is, in negotiations of this nature, remains to be revealed. The atmosphere is unfavourable to calm deliberation and just appraisement. The reshaping of the world out-of-hand, to the quieting of all causes of discord, is humanly impossible. Together Britain and America would be irresistible if they were agreed, and if they were ready for a brave, large gesture of world-service—but they are not ready. Amer-

ica had only enough of the war to make it mad and not enough to subdue it; Britain had enough to make it bitter. As a penalty of having no axe to grind, America will have to bear the odium of insisting upon sound principles and telling unpalatable truths, and so may not come off well. We shall see whether there is any honour among nations, whether the terms of the Armistice will be made a "scrap of paper," and whether there is to be a league of peace or a new balance of power—a new imperialism for the old. Meanwhile, all ears will be glued to the keyhole, straining to hear even a whisper of "open covenants, openly arrived at."

*January 30th.*—On my way back from Scotland I broke my journey at Leicester, to preach in the church of Robert Hall—the Pork-Pie Church, as they call it, because of its circular shape. In the evening I lectured on Lincoln. Leicester, I remembered, had been the home of William Carey, and I went to see his little Harvey Lane Church, where he dreamed his great dream and struggled with drunken deacons. Just across the narrow street is the red-brick cottage where he lived, teaching a few pupils and working at his cobbler's bench to eke out a living. It is now a Missionary Museum, preserved as nearly as possible in its original form and furniture, its ceiling so low that I could hardly stand erect. There, in his little back-shop,—with its bench and tools, like those Carey used,—a great man worked. Pegging away, he nevertheless kept a map of the world on the opposite wall of his shop, dreaming the while of world-conquest for Christ. There, too, he thought out that mighty sermon which took its text from Isaiah 54:2, 3, and had two points: Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.

No other sermon of that period—1792—had only two points, and none ever had a finer challenge to the faith of

Christian men. We need the vision of Carey in this broken world to-day, that so, however humble our lot, we may learn to think in world-terms—in terms, that is, of one humanity and one Christianity. I felt myself standing at the fountain-head of that river of God which will yet make this war-ridden earth blossom as a rose.

*April 8th:*—The City Temple mail-bag entails an enormous amount of labour, bringing almost a hundred letters a week; but it is endlessly interesting. There are letters of all kinds—a series from Manchester proving that the world is hollow and that we live on the inside—and from everywhere: China, India, France, America, and all over Britain. If an American says a naughty thing about Britain, a copy of it is sent to me, underlined. If it is the other way round, I am not allowed to forget it. There are letters from ministers whose faith has been shaken, and from others who want to go to America; pitiful letters from shell-shocked boys in hospitals; letters from bereaved parents and widowed girls—heroic, appealing, heart-breaking, like that from an old woman in the north of England whose life of sorrow was crowned by the loss of her two grandsons in the war. In closing she said: “Me youth is gone, me hope is dead, me heart is heavy; but I neglect no duty.” To which I could only reply that, though God had taken everything else, in leaving her a love of righteousness He had left her the best gift He had.

As nearly all the City Temple sermons and prayers are published, both hearers and readers write to agree or disagree, or, more often, to relate difficulties of faith or duty. The mail-bag is thus an index to the varying moods of the time in respect to matters of faith, and I learn more from it than I am able to teach others. Every time a sermon has to do with Christ, it is sure to be followed by a shower of letters, asking that the subject be carried further. In spite of the agitations of the world,—perhaps because of them,

—What think ye of Christ? remains the most absorbing and fascinating of all questions.

Somehow, in spite of my practice for the last ten years, I have always had a shrinking feeling about writing and printing prayers. Yet, when I receive letters telling how perplexed and weary folk are helped by them, I relent. Public prayer, of course, is different from private devotion; it is individual, indeed, but representative and symbolic, too. One speaks for many, some of whom are dumb of soul, and if one can help others to pray, it is worth while. Yesterday, in the Authors' Club, a man took me aside and told me this story. He was an officer invalidated out of the service, having been wounded and smitten with fever in the Mesopotamian campaign. He took from his pocket a tiny book,—it looked like a notebook,—saying that it contained the bread, the meat, the milk, all that had kept his soul alive on the long marches and the weary waits in the hospitals. I thought it was, perhaps, a copy of the New Testament, or the "Imitation of Christ"; but, on opening it, I found ten of my little prayers cut from the paper and pasted in the book. Such things help me to go on, even against a shrinking I cannot define.

*April 16th:*—The hearings of the British Coal Commission, in the King's Robing-Room, some of which I have attended, look and sound like a social judgment-day. Never, I dare say, has England seen such pitiless publicity on the lives of the workers, the fabulous profits of the owners,—running up as high as 147 per cent,—and the "rigging" of the public. It is like a searchlight suddenly turned on. No wonder the country stands aghast. Nothing could surpass the patience, the courage, the relentless politeness of Robert Smillie, who conducts the case for the miners. He has had all England on dress-parade—lords, dukes, and nobles—while he examined them as to the

titles to their holdings. They were swift and often witty in their replies, but it means much that they had to come when summoned by a miner. They were bored and surly, but they humbly obeyed. Truly, we are in a new England; and though their lordships may have a brief success in the King's Robing-Room, they are in fact already defeated—and they know it. They win a skirmish, but they lose a battle.

*May 10th.*—What the Free Catholicism may turn out to be remains to be disclosed; so far, it is more clever and critical than constructive. W. E. Orchard is its Bernard Shaw, and W. G. Peck its Chesterton. At first, it was thought to be only a protest against the ungracious barrenness of Nonconformist worship, in behalf of rhythm, colour, and symbolism. But it is more than that. It seeks to unite personal religious experience with its corporate and symbolical expression, thus blending two things too often held apart. As between Anglicans and Nonconformists, it discovers the higher unity of things which do not differ, seeking the largeness of Christ in whose radiance there is room for every type of experience and expression. It lays emphasis on fellowship, since no one can find the truth for another, and no one can find it alone. Also, by reinterpreting and extending the sacramental principle, and at the same time disinfecting it of magic, the Free Catholicism may give new impetus to all creative social endeavour. For years it has been observed that many ultra-high Churchmen—for example, Bishop Gore, who is one of the noblest characters in modern Christianity—have been leaders in the social interpretation of Christianity. Perhaps, at last, we shall learn that it was not the Church, but Humanity, with which Jesus identified Himself when He said: ‘This is my body broken for you.’ The great thing about Christianity is that no one can tell what it will do next.

*June 2nd:*—Have been down in Wales for a day or two, lecturing on Lincoln, and also feeling the pulse of the public sentiment. I found it beating quick and hot. Indeed, not only in Wales, but all over the north of England, there is white-hot indignation—all due to that wretched election last autumn. One hears revolutionary talk on all sides, and only a spark is needed to make an explosion. When I see the hovels in which the miners live,—squalid huts, more like pig-pens than human homes,—I do not wonder at the unrest of the people, but at their infinite patience. Physical and moral decay are inevitable, and the spiritual life is like a fourth dimension. I asked a Labour leader what it is that is holding things together, and he replied: ‘All that holds now is the fact that these men went to Sunday School in the churches and chapels of Wales years ago; nothing else restrains them.’ Thus a religious sense of the common good, of communal obligation, holds, when all other ties give way. But the churches and chapels are empty to-day, and in the new generation what will avert the ‘emancipated, atheistic, international democracy,’ so long predicted? Religion must do something more than restrain and conserve: it must create and construct. If ever we find the secret of creative social evolution, it will be in a deeper insight into the nature and meaning of religion as a social reality, as well as a private mysticism. This at least is plain: the individual and the social gospel belong together, and neither will long survive the shipwreck of the other. Never, this side of heaven, do I expect to hear such singing as I heard in Wales!

*June 4th:*—Wherever Americans foregather one is almost certain to meet Lord Bryce or Lord Charnwood, and sometimes one is fortunate enough to meet both of them. As *liaison* officers of the highest type and usefulness, there are no others like them. They know America

—none better than Lord Bryce who, in his “American Commonwealth” helped to interpret America to itself; and no one may ever hope to have the same place in the veneration and goodwill of America which he holds, both for his character and his service. Last night he told some charming reminiscences of President Roosevelt and his boys. Lord Charnwood knows America, too—he once lived in Iowa, I am told—and his “Life of Lincoln” has done much to make the supreme figure of our history a common possession of the English-speaking race. If he writes the life of Washington, it will put us still further in his debt.

Lord Bryce seems discouraged about the future of democracy, as he well may be, unless there is a spiritual orientation to cleanse it of weakness and give it direction and a sense of responsibility. Democracy is the raw truth and fact about life, nothing else; not so much a form of government as the stuff out of which government is to be made. It is the whole people acting, and responsibility is spread out so widely that it becomes attenuated to the point of extinction. The individual escapes because his act disappears underground, so to speak, and is transformed beyond recognition by the time it emerges. It fosters selfishness without fear of consequences. So far from being a panacea, without moral leadership, without spiritual vision, it may be a plague.

*June 10th.*—Much is being said about the ultimate influence of the war of Christian theology. It is too early to surmise, but some things begin to be clear. It was an august and awful demonstration of the moral, social, and spiritual purpose of God in history. Perhaps its most deeply felt truth was that God suffers with us, though the dogma of a Finite God—brought forward by Wells, and, earlier by Rolland, in “Jean Christophe”—while valid as a protest against a God who lives aloof from humanity,

is unequal to the deepest necessities of man. Atonement is now known to be a fact, not a fiction. We are not our own; we are bought with a price. Human nature has been revealed in an apocalypse, its good and evil alike. Christian faith must be thought out anew, as that faith involves a new bearing of nations to one another, and a vision of the fact that the interests of humanity as a whole actually exist. The "Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven" is being discovered. The church must be not simply a house of holy mystery, but also a fellowship in which the great social ideals are realised under religious influences. The missionary enterprise has new meanings and implications, and must have new methods. It is significant that it interested the men at the front more than almost any other religious theme. The discussions as to the fate of those fallen in the war—many of whom were not "converted"—show that the dogma of eternal punishment is repudiated by the moral sense of mankind. One need not turn sentimental and rush everybody all at once into heaven, but the war must inevitably modify our thought of the destiny of man.

*June 12th:*—Attended a remarkable meeting in the Royal Albert Hall in behalf of the League of Nations. Earl Grey presided, and in a brief address—more impressive for matter than for manner—he stated the necessity for some attempt to organise the finer forces of mankind. The chief speaker was Lord Robert Cecil, whose character, personality, and practical Christian idealism make him an invaluable asset not only to his own country, but to civilisation. He read his address, only lifting his eyes from the manuscript when interrupted. No heckler intruded until the orator said, with emphasis, that the League must include *all* nations. At once there was an uproar. From all parts of the vast Hall came cries of protest and hot dissent. Bible texts were hurled at the

speaker, who stood, cool as an Alp, calmly wiping his glasses. "Must Germany be allowed to enter the League?" was the burden of the protest. "All nations," the orator repeated. "Traitor! Traitor!" was shouted from different parts of the audience. Confusion reigned. There were fights, and more than one man was thrown down stairs. The proceedings then proceeded—the orator having remained unruffled—until a woman with a shrill voice in the top gallery asked about Ireland. The speaker replied: "Ireland was ably represented at the Conference, I hope, by General Smuts and myself." As it did no good to interrupt, Lord Robert was allowed to finish his address without further disturbance, and the meeting was at an end. It was the most militant peace meeting I have attended.

*June 16th.*—Henry James said that three marks distinguish London—her size, her parks, and her 'magnificent mystification.' To know the mystification one needs to spend a night—cool, moonless, and windy—on top of St. Paul's Cathedral. After climbing as many steps as there are days in the year and a journey through devious diagonals, we emerge by a tiny door leading to the Golden Gallery, three hundred feet above the sleeping city. Sounds as they ascend are isolated and identifiable, even when softened by distance or teased by the wind. Fleet Street, westward, is a ravine of yellow glamour. Cheapside looks like a fissure in the side of a volcano, where blackness swallows up everything else. The bridges play at criss-cross with lamp-reflections in the river. The clock-tower of Westminster, like a moon and a half, shines dimly, and the railway signals at Cannon Street Station look like stars of the under-world—crimson, emerald, amber. By half-past three a sky, mottled with heavy clouds, begins to sift them into planes and fills the breaks with the sort of light that is 'rather darkness visible.'

Slowly the pall over the city, half mist and half smoke,—the same ‘presumptuous smoake’ of Evelyn’s day,—begins to drift sullenly with the wind, like a gas-attack. An hour ago the lamplights made everything seem ghostly; now the ghostliness is theirs. Presently, out of a sea of slate, Wren’s steeples rise like gaunt spectres, with an air compounded of amazement and composure. The last thing to take shape is the Cathedral itself; first the gilt Cross shines palely, then the Lantern grows to unearthly whiteness, but the Dome still broods in darkness. As we watch, the campaniles and the statues below turn from alabaster to ivory. Squadrons of clouds float in an atmosphere that is turning from grey to pearl, and from pearl to gold, like the rosy *amorini* in a Venetian altarpiece. The river is astir with barges, and early trams sprinkle grains of humanity about the thoroughfares. Camden Town crawls back under its pall of industrial smoke. At last the city, in all its infinitude of detail, is revealed, and the mystification of the night gives way to the day with ‘sovran eye.’ A flashing glimpse of the Cathedral from within, in the glow of the eastern windows, makes one wonder why we do not offer our worship, as they do in the East, at dawn.

*June 30th.*—Have been making a little collection and study of soldier books, and one reads them with mingled exaltation and sadness. First, the literature of the trenches, the poems of Seeger, Brooke, Letts, Sorley, Kettle, Sassoon; the letters of Harold Chapin, Dawson, Chevrillon, Heath; the essays of Hankey—the very thought of whom is as “a footstep, always light, of one untimely gone away.” It is a body of sacred writing which anyone should read whose faith has grown dim, clouded by the dicker and deal of the Peace Conference. Second, the letters, diaries, and brief, blotted memoirs of men who fell, edited by their family or friends, two of

the most haunting of which are the "Letters of Arthur Heath," edited by Prof. Murray, and the divinely beautiful biography of her son by Lady Pamela Glenconner, telling of one who was "the soul of activity without restlessness," subtle of mind yet "candid as the skies." Aye, it is an evil world in which such shining figures are cut down. A precious collection of letters to mothers might be made from the literature of the trenches. For it was to their mothers that the men turned when death hovered, not to get comfort but to give it! These little books are the final rebuke to the half cynical, half pessimistic mood by which we are tempted.

Oddly enough, the greatest of all war books was written before the war, "The Dynasts," by Thomas Hardy, in which we see humanity writhing in the agonies of the Napoleonic wars—an embattled and tortured earth under a passionless sky—to an accompaniment of the Spirits Ironic and Sinister answering, antiphonally, the Spirits of the Pities. To-day, once again, sinister voices laugh at our noblest ideals, and mock all talk of forgiveness. Yet, hardly audible in the clamour, one detects the faint, prophetic notes of the Pities telling of a Will that will not tarry "till it fashion all things fair."

*July 6th:*—Studdert Kennedy—"Woodbine Willie," as the Tommies called him—is undoubtedly the greatest preacher to men which the war discovered and developed; and one has only to hear him to understand why. He loves it, knows the knack of it, and it was a great sight to see him addressing a vast khaki-clad audience, using the direct speech of the soldier—even his slang—to discuss profound issues of faith, as well as intimate personal problems. What he called "Rough Talks of a Padre" were in fact great sermons, and when to their forthright and vivid style one adds a rich Irish accent and a personality as virile as it is winsome, it is easy to know the secret

of his power. It would be difficult for anyone to forget his address entitled, "Why Aren't All the Best Chaps Christians?" The last time I heard him the sermon had to do with the truth that God limits Himself to make room for man—giving us a tiny province within His Divine providence. It was a very striking sermon, but I thought he should have distinguished more clearly between the truth of the reticence, the restraint, the august humility of God, and the idea of a finite God fumbling His way through time, not knowing His own mind, as proclaimed by our novelist-theologians. The one is Christian Gospel; the other a camouflaged atheism.

*July 19th:*—A Day of Peace, and the celebration, both civic and religious, was overwhelming in its impressiveness. Not even London, grey with history and legend, ever witnessed such a procession of nations. Picturesque costumes reappeared, quaint old customs were revived—as when the trumpeters once more stood on the steps of St. Paul's and proclaimed peace, as in days of old. The military pageant, led by Americans, in which all the Allied armies were represented, was thrilling beyond words. Somehow, in a way one cannot describe, all felt that another army, unseen but radiant, was marching in London to-day. In Whitehall a Cenotaph had been erected, and it became a solemn Altar of the Dead, at which high and humble alike paid homage, amid scenes that made the heart ache—as when an old woman, bowed and broken, slowly dropped three roses upon the mountain of flowers—one for each of her boys given for the common weal. The Halleluiah Chorus sung by eight thousand voices in Hyde Park echoed like the sound of many waters. In St. Paul's, in the Abbey, in the City Temple—in church and chapel all over the land—men thanked God with sobs in their songs, as if the words of the poet had been fulfilled :

When the Te Deums seek the skies,  
When the Organ shakes the Dome,  
    A dead man shall stand  
    At each live man's hand—  
For they also have come home.

*July 25th.*—With appalling clarity we are beginning to see how little we gained by the war, and how much we lost. Instead of a world worthy of the generosity and idealism of the dead, we have moral collapse, revolutionary influenza, industrial chaos, and an orgy of extravagance. In politics, in business, in social life, things are done which would have excited horror and disgust in 1914. One recalls the lines of Chesterton written after the landslide election of 1906:—

The evil Power, that stood for Privilege  
And went with Women and Champagne and Bridge,  
Ceased: and Democracy assumed its reign,  
Which went with Bridge and Women and Champagne.

Nothing is more terrible than the moral let-down all about us, unless it is the ease and haste with which a wild and forgetful world has proved false to the vows it swore in its hour of terror. Yesterday a London magistrate said that half the crime in the kingdom is bigamy. Reticences and modesties seem to have been thrown overboard to an accompaniment of the jazz dance, which has become a symbol of the mood of the hour. Often it has been said that man is the modest sex, but I never believed it until now. Young girls between fifteen and twenty-two are unmanageable, and imitate the manners of courtesans. Working for good wages, they are independent of their parents, demanding latchkeys, to come and go at all hours; and at the slightest restraint they leave home. In broad daylight the public parks are scenes of such unspeakable vulgarity that one is grateful for the protection of garden walls. Who can estimate the injury done by this loosen-

ing of the moral bonds, this letting down of the bars to the brute? Those who speak of war as a purifier of morals are masters of a Satanic satire!

*September 18th:*—The first World-Congress of the Brotherhood Movement, held in the City Temple at my invitation, closed last night. The first day was like a Pentecost, and we heard men from the ends of the earth, black, white, brown, yellow—Hindu, Hebrew, African—each in his own tongue making plea for Brotherhood as the balm for a wounded world. All see that some spirit other than hate, some principle other than selfishness, some vision larger than sect or race must rule, if the world is to hold together. The Prime Minister preached a fine sermon, painting the new world that is to be—but how it is to be brought about by a Tory-Brewery Parliament is hard to know. This at least is true: Brotherhood is not a mere detail in the religion of Jesus, but its essence and glory; and in nothing has His church failed more pitifully than in its lack of brotherliness. Its creeds, its rituals, have been framed, it would seem, to exclude, not to include, as if to build a hedge fence about the limitless love of God. The Will to Fellowship must find its centre in the church, if it is to overcome the Will to Rivalry. All through the Congress the words of David Swing, in an unfinished sermon left on his desk, kept ringing in my ears: “We must all hope much from the gradual progress of brotherly love—”; and indeed we have no other hope.

(More than once my Diary has spoken rather sharply of the Prime Minister; but it is understood, of course, that it speaks of him only in his public capacity as a political leader. For Mr. Lloyd George personally I have the greatest admiration, alike for his character and his genius, as any man must have who knows his career from the time when he was a “little brother of the poor”

in Wales, all through his heroic fight for the oppressed and disinherited in Britain. Indeed, it was just for that reason, because his attitude in the election of 1918 and at the Peace Conference—as well as his horrible Black and Tan policy in Ireland later—were so out of character, that I was filled with sorrow and dismay. Recently he has seemed to return to his true character, and with the inconsistency characteristic of the opportunist we have seen him negotiating with the leaders of Ireland, whom he had denounced as ruffians and red-handed murderers. No matter whether his change of temper and tactics is due to the return of the better angels of his nature, or to the threat of impending chaos, it is matter for rejoicing. Let us hope that he will once more take up and carry through the great reforms laid aside at the outbreak of the war, especially the emancipation of the land, without which it seems impossible for Britain to find her way out of the social and economic difficulties in which she is involved. Anyway, as matters now stand, no living man has it in his power to do more for humanity than Mr. Lloyd George: pray God he may see his opportunity, seize it and use it, and attain to that supreme fame which, as Gladstone said, is akin to ideal excellence.)

*September 20th:*—After a Pentecost of Brotherhood—a railway strike! It is a mixed situation. Since the railways are still in the hands of the Government, it is in fact a strike against the State. As such it will fail, for no community dare allow one class to impose its will by force. It would mean the end of Parliamentary Government, already weakened by the trick election last year. Such is the muddle—error and ill-will on both sides, and action taken in haste. Meantime, it is amusing to see noblemen acting as porters at the railway stations, and great artists driving food vans in the slums. It will do

them good; it will do us all good, if it helps to melt, or even to mitigate, that spirit of caste which some thought would disappear, but remains—cutting us into classes and sects. Only by some form of corporate or group activity, such as we are now witnessing, can we realise and make practical that spirit of comradeship so much needed in industrial life.

*September 22nd.*—These are days when anything may happen. Having lived for five years in an atmosphere of violence, men are irritable, and riots break out on the slightest pretext. Many fear that the history of a century ago, when Peterloo followed Waterloo, may repeat itself. Nobody is satisfied with the result of the Peace Conference—sorriest of sequels to a victory won by solidarity and sacrifice. Some think the treaty too hard, some too soft, and all wonder how it can be enforced without sowing the seeds of other wars. The Covenant of the League is criticised as keenly here as in America, but with nothing like the poisonous partisan and personal venom displayed at home. It is felt that, if the nations hold together, the Covenant can be amended and the treaty revised and made workable as need requires; but if they pull apart, the case is hopeless.

What is happening in America is hard to make out, except that, under cover of a poison-gas attack on the President, all the elements that opposed the war—including the whole hyphenated contingent—have formed a coalition of hatreds to destroy him. At the Peace Conference he was the victim of a vendetta by men of his own country who, for partisan purposes, tried to stab their own President in the back at the very moment when he was negotiating a treaty of peace in a foreign land! Not unnaturally the attitude of the Senate is interpreted on this side as a repudiation of the war by America. “You came late and go early; having helped to put out the

fire, you leave us to clean up the mess," my English friends say. No wonder they feel bitter, and this feeling is fanned by the anti-American fanatics, whose organised propaganda—something new in England—has been so active since the Armistice. No doubt it is provoked in part by the stupid anti-British propaganda in America, with other elements added, the while sinister forces are busy in behalf of estrangement between two peoples who should be, not only friends, but fellow workers for the common good.

Fortunately, it has its funny side, as when I saw in Regent Street a card in a tailor shop as follows: "Pantaloons Pressed, two and six a leg, all seats free; Americans not wanted!" Another sign just off the Strand read: "Definition. An American—A Man Who Chews Gum and Wins Wars." The humour has a sting in it, but it is good humour none the less, as I learned when I asked the proprietor why he did not add "horn-rimmed glasses" to his description of Americans. He laughed as if to split—and so long as we can laugh as he did we shall be safe and sane, however silly we may talk.

(An unhappy example of this feeling, which marred the closing weeks of my ministry, was an alleged "interview" which appeared in the *Daily News*, purporting to come from me. It made me use words remote from my thought, in a spirit foreign to my nature; and the result was an impression so alien to my spirit, and so untrue to the facts, as to be grotesque. Such words as these were put into my mouth: "I have come reluctantly to the opinion that an American minister cannot really succeed in England. There is something in the English character or point of view—I cannot define it—that seems to prevent complete agreement and sympathy between the two. There exists a body of opinion amongst the middle men

in the ministry and the churches that objects to the permanent settlement of American preachers in this country." All of which was manufactured so far as I was concerned, however true it may be to English opinion. When the man who did it was asked for his reason, he said that he wished "to keep American ministers from coming to England." Of course, it will take more than that to keep us from going to England, but the incident illustrates the state of mind almost a year after the Armistice.)

*October 9th.*—Sir Oliver Lodge lectured in the City Temple to-night. The Temple was full, with many standing in the aisles. His subject was "The Structure of the Atom," and he spoke for more than an hour, holding his audience in breathless interest. Even the children present heard and understood, as if it had been a fairy-story. Indeed, it was more fascinating than a fairy-story—his illustrations were so simple, so vivid. As a work of art, the lecture was a rare feat. If only the men of the pulpit could deal with the great themes of faith—surely not more abstract than the structure of the atom—with the same simplicity and lucidity, how different it would be! Tall, well-formed, his dome-like head reminding one of the pictures of Tennyson, the lecturer was good to look at, good to hear; and the total impression of his lecture was an overwhelming sense of the reality of the Unseen. He made only one reference to psychical studies, and that was to warn people to go slow, not to leap beyond the facts, and, above all,—since spiritualism is not spirituality,—not to make such matters a religion. This advice came with the greater weight from the man who more than all others, perhaps, has lifted such investigations to the dignity of a new science.

*October 12th.*—Mr. Asquith, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Clynes, and Premier Venizelos of Greece, all on the same

platform, speaking in behalf of the League of Nations! Such was the bill of fare at the Mansion House, to which was added—for me—a spicy little chat with Mrs. Asquith, most baffling of women. She is lightning and fragrance all mixed up with a smile, and the lightning never strikes twice in the same place. Mr. Asquith read his address—as he has been wont to do since he first became Prime Minister—in a style as lucid as sunlight and as colourless: a deliberate and weighty address, more like a judicial opinion than an oration, yet with an occasional flash of hidden fire. Clynes also read his address, which was a handicap, for he is a very effective speaker when he lets himself go. Lord Robert—tall, stooped, with centuries of British culture written in his face—was never more eloquent in his wisdom and earnestness; and one heard in his grave and simple words the finer mind of England. If only he were more militant, as he would be but for too keen a sense of humour. He has the spiritual quality which one misses so much in the statesmanship of our day—I shall never be happy until he is Prime Minister! Venizelos was winning, graceful, impressive; and in a brief talk that I had with him afterward, he spoke with warm appreciation of the nobility and high-mindedness of the President. He has the brightest eyes I have seen since William James went away. Without the moral greatness of Masaryk, or the Christian vision of Smuts, he is one of the most interesting personalities of our time and one of its ablest men.

*October 20th:*—The President is stricken at a time when he is most needed! It is appalling! Without him reaction will run riot. Though wounded in a terrifying manner, he still holds the front-line trench of the moral idealism of the world! Whatever his faults at home,—his errors of judgment or his limitations of temperament,—in his world-vision he saw straight; and he made the

only proposal looking toward a common mind organised in the service of the common good. Nothing can rob him of that honour. If our people at home had only known the sinister agencies with which he had to contend,—how all the militarists of Europe were mobilised against him at Paris,—they would see that his achievement, while falling below his ideal, as all mortal achievements do, was nothing short of stupendous. Those who know the scene from this side have an honourable pride in the President; and though his fight should cost him his life, when the story is finally told he will stand alongside another who went “the way of dominion in pitiful, high-hearted fashion” to his martyrdom. He falls where a brave man should fall, at the front, as much a casualty of the war as any soldier who fell in Flanders or the Argonne.

*November 11th.*—Sunday evening, the 9th, was my last service as the Minister of the City Temple, and the sermon had for its text Revelation 3:14—“These things saith the Amen.” It was an effort to interpret that old, familiar, haunting word,—the Amen of God to the aspiration of man, and the Amen of man to the way and will of God,—seeking to make vivid that vision which sees through the shadows, and affirms, not that all is well, nor yet that all is ill, but that all shall be well when “God hath made the pile complete.” Its message was that, when humanity sees what has been the Eternal Purpose from the beginning, and the “far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves,” the last word of history will be a grand Amen—a shout of praise, the final note of the great world-song. To-day, at noon, all over the Empire, everything paused for two minutes, in memory of the dead. The City Temple was open and many people gathered for that moment of silent, high remembrance; and that hushed moment was my farewell to the great white pulpit, and to a ministry wrought in the name of Jesus in behalf of

goodwill—speaking with stammering voice those truths which will still be eloquent when all the noises of to-day have followed the feet that made them, into Silence.

*November 12th:*—To-night the National Council of the Brotherhood Movement, which gave me so warm a welcome in 1916, tendered me a parting dinner—an hour which I can neither describe nor forget. Dr. Clifford—a veteran soldier in the wars of God—presided, and his presence was a benediction. Looking back over my three years and a half in London, I can truly say that, though I did not want to come, and would not have come at all but for the war, I do not regret that I did come—save for the scenes of horror and suffering, which I pray God to be able to forget. Nor do I regret leaving, though my ministry has been a triumph from the beginning, in spite of many errors of my own added to the terrible conditions under which it was wrought. As long as I live I shall carry in my heart the faces of my dear friends in England, and especially the love and loyalty of the people of the City Temple—the memory of their kindness is like sacramental wine in the Cup of Everlasting Things. Perhaps, on the other side of the sea, because I now know the spirit and point of view of both peoples, I may be able to help forward the great friendship.

*November 14th:*—Hung in my memory are many pictures of the beauty-spots of this Blessed Island: glens in the Highlands of Scotland; the “banks and braes o’ bonny Doon”; stately old cathedrals,—strong, piteous, eloquent,—sheltering the holy things of life; the towers and domes of Oxford; Stoke Poges on a still summer day; the roses of Westcliff; the downs of Wiltshire, where Walton went a-fishing and Herbert preached the gospel—and practised it, too; Rottingdean-on-the-Sea; scenes of the Shakespeare country—the church, the theatre, the winding Avon; the old Quaker Meeting-house in Buckinghamshire, where

Penn and Pennington sleep; the mountains of North Wales; great, grey London, in all its myriad moods: London in the fog, the mist, the rain; London by moonlight; the old, rambling city whose charm gathers and grows, weaving a spell which one can neither define nor escape; London from Primrose Hill on a clear, frosty day; London from the dome of St. Paul's; London from the Savoy in October, seen through a lattice of falling leaves, while a soft haze hangs over the River of Years. It is said that, if one lives in London five years, he will never be quite happy anywhere else—and I am leaving it just in time!

THE END









